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## *An Existentialist Approach to Literature*<sup>1</sup>

THE title of this paper is perhaps not comprehensive enough, for first and foremost existentialism is an approach to life, while literature at its best is but a symbolization of life. An approach to literature by definition implies an approach to life. Let us speak then of an existentialist approach to life and letters. One should emphasize the indefinite article, "*An* existentialist approach . . .," because there are many existentialisms, and in fact it seems to be of the essence of a truly existentialist approach that there is nothing dogmatic, nothing stereotyped, nothing professional about it whatsoever. Like idealism, like realism, existentialism—as another mold of human reaction to the otherness beyond—harbors many antagonisms within itself.

Of course there is a danger here. Only a few years ago the very topic of existentialism sounded rather forbidding, due probably to a general lack of information on the subject in this country. In the meantime the situation has changed in the opposite direction. For one thing, the organs of the young literary radicals are filled with existentialist discussions centered chiefly on Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Franz Kafka, and others—organs such as *The Partisan Review*, *The Modern Review*, *Chimera*, *Accent*, *Horizon*, etc.—but our learned journals have begun to take notice too, feeling the impact of the recent translations of Søren Kierkegaard's works, and the names of the German existentialists whom Kierkegaard partly inspired, Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers, are becoming very familiar even beyond the circle of philosophers and theologians. Add to this the interest of the daily and weekly news sheets, and you will see why the immediate result appears to have been a notable degree of bewilderment, not to say confusion, stemming, more or less, from the tacit but mistaken assumption that existentialism represents an integrated philosophy while actually it is rather a new, if revolutionizing direction of thought, a new, if radical shift of accent.

On the whole, however, it looks as though informed opinion were about to crystallize, an opinion inclined to stress the seemingly negative, morbid, sinister, despairing aspects of this new direction, and in a sense one may certainly claim that it is distinctly a symptom of modern man's malaise in a post-war world. Jean-Paul Sartre, or at any rate his success, is obviously

<sup>1</sup> A paper read before the Research Club of the University of Michigan, May 19, 1948 (slightly revised).

unthinkable without the débâcle of France in 1940 and the ensuing Résistance. But that is saying little. We must visualize the well-nigh total demolition of European life and culture, in its moral and social significance even more than in a physical and economic sense, in order to fathom the yearning of the nations. Seen against this background, existentialism appeals because it does away with all sorts of shams and pretenses, because it gets down to the concrete experience of a furiously evolving life as so many have lived it, because it seems to offer a realistic approach that everybody who has suffered can understand. The fact is, nevertheless, that as early as 1938 Karl Jaspers commented in his book, *Vernunft und Existenz*, on the soul-shaking spectacle even then presented by western civilization, of "the decay of all intellectual authority, the radical disillusionment of an arrogant trust in Reason, a dissolution of all bonds of inner obligation," which to him were a sure forewarning that anything, just anything could happen to mankind. Well, it did happen and it is still happening, but it did not happen overnight, it had been in the making for years and decades. And if now a counter-movement has set in, a desperate attempt to escape this all-devouring vortex of fate, it ought not to be disposed of as just another aberration, or merely a fad, of our age. It will be our first concern to sketch, however briefly and in as untechnical terms as possible, the basic premises and the basic conclusions of the new approach.

Really, it is *not* a new approach. For one thing, we should go back, as already indicated, at least to Kierkegaard who did his most telling work just about 100 years ago, dying in 1855 at the age of 42. But though the great Danish theologian was the first to use the words "to exist" and "existence" in the specific philosophic sense which we now have to attach to them, he himself discovered a spiritual kinsman in as early a thinker as Socrates, the father of ethics as a philosophy, and in more recent centuries existentialist traits of thinking are plainly discernible in Blaise Pascal, in Hamann, in Lessing and quite a few others. Above all, the heritage of Jakob Böhme's mysticism and the whole concept of *Innerlichkeit* developed by some of the German Romanticists cannot be overlooked. On the other hand, the line does not lead directly from Kierkegaard to Heidegger and Jaspers, our contemporaries, but to mention but a few, Nietzsche, Wilhelm Dilthey, and Bergson must be listed here, and if the atheist Sartre deserves our attention, so do theistic existentialists like Gabriel Marcel and Martin Buber, besides a host of thinkers in broader fields, e.g. Albert Schweitzer. In order to find the red thread which may be running through the texture of all these types of thought it may suffice—in fact it must suffice for the purpose of this report—to try to uncover what Kierkegaard and Sartre, the believer and the unbeliever, have in common philosophically speaking.

As is well known, Kierkegaard's all-consuming problem was not, let us say, "What is Christianity?" or "What historical evidence is there as to the



truth of Christianity?" but the sternly personal and passionate question, "How do I become a Christian?" and the theologians, especially of the school of Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, Channing-Pearce, and others have made this aspect of his work their focal interest in him. Now it is not necessary to be a Christian to appreciate Kierkegaard. We must, rather, try to lay bare the basic pattern of his thinking not as regards Christianity, but as regards man. And there we find, reversing the age-old order of the two concepts, the rockbottom conviction, baldly stated, that "existence precedes essence," i.e., that the particular precedes the universal, the concrete the abstract, experience cognition. With this fundamental thesis Sartre, like any other avowed existentialist, agrees completely and wholeheartedly. First of all it means, to use the words of Paul Tillich, himself an existentialist of no mean order, that "the existentialist thinker is the thinker who is interested in his subject infinitely, personally, and passionately, while the non-existential thinker, scientist, historian, or speculative philosopher tries to cultivate an attitude of objectivity and disinterestedness."<sup>2</sup> It will be noted that no value judgment is necessarily implied in this. We shall see later that the existentialist attitude does not in any sense impinge upon the validity of authentic scientific and scholarly pursuits, it only "shifts the accent," or more specifically, it establishes the challenge of an order of reference of a metaphysical type to which all these pursuits should ultimately be oriented. It is only when these pursuits, which, as he sees it, in their very nature are finite, temporal, historical, limited in scope and method, only when these pursuits pretend to have plumbed the ultimate secret of human existence in terms of the absolute, only then does Kierkegaard object and as a matter of fact protest, and his ever-recurring case in point, in fact his butt of ridicule, is nothing less than the all-embracing philosophic system of Hegel. But for that matter, he might have used almost any other "system" which claims to deal, in an "objective" way, with what he defines as existential questions.

Now "existence," regardless of what the dictionaries may have to say about the word, to Kierkegaard means a challenge, it means decision. "To exist" means to him to be and to keep afloat on 70,000 fathoms of responsibility. In the words of Oliver Wendell Holmes: "Man is born to act. To act is to affirm the worth of an end, and to affirm the worth of an end is to create an ideal." Kierkegaard would have subscribed to this and so would Sartre, for to be born, to live, to exist can only mean to assume before one's own solitary self in the manifestation of his life the free responsibility imposed upon him by the *hic et nunc*, the Here and Now. Existence precedes essence, because "essence," so called, is ultimately an abstraction, a mere theory, however universal. We may recall the words of Mephistopheles

<sup>2</sup> *American Scandinavian Review*, XXX (1942), 255.

spoken to the student in Goethe's *Faust*:

"Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie,  
Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum."

Of course, the Tree of Life to Mephisto means temptation, but temptation, as Faust discovers to his sorrow, is also just another word for responsibility before himself. It is the self-revealed inexorable duty of each one of us to be aware, *totaliter*, of our responsibility in the immediacy of each and every moment, for if we are genuinely alive we all live in a constant state of subconscious tension, in *angest*, anxiety, fear, *angoisse* as the French translate it, to wit: the fear of nothingness, of senselessness, of the absurd chaos that would result if responsibility did not exist as a regulative, or if you will, metaphysical force in an otherwise purposeless cosmos. *Angest*, then, is not a temporary, accidental, let alone a neurotic condition of the mind but a religious and ethical force, experienced in the depths of the subconscious.

But who or what tells a man what his responsibility is? There is nothing but the inner voice stemming from my profound awareness of the otherness around me by which alone my own life is defined, given content and direction: that inscrutable authority which somehow patterns the world and which tells me "Thou shalt." Beyond all the teachable findings of social and psychological research, it is up to me to listen to it and to interpret it "in fear and trembling" correctly, to "choose" correctly, as Sartre phrases it. Kierkegaard illustrates this point by retelling, in several versions, the story of Abraham's temptation who is ordered by the Lord to sacrifice his own son, to commit murder in the name of God. Though the Old Testament says nothing about it, in such a situation anybody might first wonder, "Who is he who demands this? What proof is there that it is truly the Lord?" There is no proof but his own faith. Sartre in his own way brings the story a little closer home in a parable from modern life.

From which it follows that all existential truths must be intrinsically subjective. This indeed is affirmed by Kierkegaard in the full force of its paradoxical form, "truth is subjectivity." To him, it does not matter what I believe to be true: what matters is only how I believe it. A false idol sincerely, fervently worshiped is worth more than the true "creed" taken over second-hand. Of course the fact must never be lost sight of that everything is here predicated on the primacy of responsibility—a powerful corrective. So while each individual is regarded as unique, there is no danger, e.g., of solipsism, least of all of an ethical solipsism. It is interesting to see how Sartre in this respect arrives at the moral equivalent of Kant's Categorical Imperative. By existence, Sartre states, man "chooses himself," that is he affirms his self in freedom, but only in such a way as he would *in good faith* "choose" all mankind. But the necessity of "choosing" is incapable since even "non-choosing" is an act of choosing, is a decision. As

Sartre finally expresses it: "L'homme est condamné à être libre," man is condemned to be free.

Thus freedom is an obligation, an "engagement" (Sartre), the most stringent obligation there is, because we live in a world, not of contemplation or speculation, not of the past or of the trivial, idle present, but in a world of the future into which we unceasingly have to project ourselves with our entire being: a world of action. For existence, to quote Kierkegaard—and this is a corollary to the entire argument—"is a constant striving." Emerson's concept that "the soul is growth" would have appealed to him, but growth as an active process, "l'engagement libre par lequel chaque homme se réalise en réalisant un type d'humanité" (Sartre), oriented to the future, to infinity. Hence the existentialist's warm support of Lessing, when Lessing, in a famous dictum, ranks the striving for truth, which is the thinker's own passionate concern, above the possession of truth—the whole truth which is for God alone.

It is easy to see that Kierkegaard's views, or rather his attitudes cannot possibly be summarized here exhaustively. His indirect and dialectical method of proving his point cannot be reproduced, and inasmuch as he was fighting systematic speculative philosophy, denying the quality of a "system" even to Christianity, he naturally did not want to create a system of his own which might be presented systematically. He would have stood aghast confronted with a book like Sartre's *L'être et le néant*. As far as we are concerned, two cardinal propositions stand out: (1) existence precedes essence; (2) existence means the inner experience of responsibility before the future, before infinity.

Perhaps we can focus the point at issue somewhat better by considering the alternatives. If existentialism is based on the thesis that there is an immediacy of concrete personal experience of which a man becomes aware through "the choice of his own self," it follows that its opposite must be anything that can be classified as "traditionalism," any doctrine, belief, attitude of mind, pattern of conduct that he accepts second-hand on some outside body's say-so, that is inculcated in him surreptitiously or otherwise by any outside agency: by school or by church, by state or by society, in life or in thought. "Institutionalism" one might also call it. In other words, the greatest foe of the self-choosing individual is the anonymous power of the traditionalized, institutionalized crowd.

Kierkegaard concluded his life-long battle, dying a martyr to his cause, by that savage arraignment of the institutionalized church of Denmark which we nowadays designate as his "Attack upon Christendom." What he demanded, without any compromise, was genuineness, integrity, honesty—and he showed how far short of this ideal the established organization actually fell. But in sounding the alarm that "There is something rotten in the state of Denmark," he also gave the first exposé of all those nameless

but subtle forces and factors which are corrupting, perverting, and destroying the meaning of western civilization in this atomic age under our very eyes. "Depersonalization" it has been called, mechanization, technocracy, the removal of all sense of personal responsibility in the broad masses of "organized" mankind which makes so many of our processes problematical if not absurd.

And here we have to go back for a moment to look into the merits of a possible and rather obvious objection. Loud and determined voices may indeed be raised in support of that very traditionalism which is here under fire: Is it not true, even according to Kierkegaard, that most of us inevitably receive, together with the function, also the meaning of our lives from the outside, from those despised but necessary institutions of state and society, family and country, profession and economy? Do not the traditions at least make for coherence and stability? If every individual really were to "choose" freely, would confusion not become worse confounded? Is it safe for all of us, and this means for any one of us, to give up the shelter of age-old patterns however precarious? One answer is: there is nothing to prevent us from "choosing," in existential freedom, any of the traditions if we can genuinely, sincerely, authentically identify ourselves with them—in fact, many of these traditions, the very best of them, will crumble unless we do. Existence precedes essence, it does not rule it out. On the contrary, no existentialist in his own right mind will want to throw away the experience of mankind, but a personal, searching reexamination of the values thus embraced must unceasingly be carried on. For on the other hand—and this is the second answer that must be given—there are insidious tendencies at work of tremendous power that would only too gladly relieve the individual from doing any choosing, making up his mind for him before he even knows that he has a mind. We all know them: the powers of authoritarianism, of totalitarianism, which try not only to inculcate but to impose absolute obedience to the Leviathan, the omnipotent state. In view of these potentialities it seems perhaps safest to fall back upon the original tenets of Kierkegaard who took Christianity for granted, or else to cling to something like Sartre's formula who affirms man in his universal "condition" as a value; but that it is possible, after all, to strike a balance between these two extremes and yet to be a true uncompromising existentialist may be vouched for by the very title of Karl Jaspers' book *Vernunft und Existenz*, "reason and existence," which to him are the two poles of the existence of mankind.

Now there are some other aspects to the whole problem, important because they have an even closer relation to the subject proper of this paper. In probing the finite human soul seeking infinity, Kierkegaard made some decisive psychological investigations, if not discoveries. Among them: How does man behave face to face with the ultimate reality, man alone with his

Maker, confronted with the very real problems of guilt, of self-sacrifice, of his own death? It is the dialectical treatment of these and related subjects that lead to such peculiarly Kierkegaardian concepts as the "leap," "repetition," "the paradox," "anxiety," and "despair." Thus he perceived depths of concrete human experience where, however vaguely, however obscurely, we become aware of attitudes, of modes of acting which we would never admit or even know about in the broad daylight of everyday occurrences. To discover and to "choose" his own self, man must be pretty close to annihilation. Hence it is clear that by way of the religious experience Kierkegaard anticipated something of our modern depth psychology, not to mention the findings of psychoanalysis. In other words, his psychological researches will stand regardless of what he may have meant to prove by them, and since he was at all times dealing with living human beings keenly observed, they are valid to this day. Now imagine the neurotic condition of modern society, the frustration, the disillusionment, the disgust, the nausea that are not entirely hidden by the pomp and circumstance of our industrial civilization—what a religionist could read in the mind of man in the blessed peaceful days of a hundred years ago is overwhelmingly confirmed in the psychic experience of sensitive writers like Rilke, Kafka, Camus, or Sartre. The war has driven the individual out of the shelter of time-honored institutions, out of the stream of holy traditions: fear, cynicism, gloom, despair are threatening to engulf millions, mankind itself is in an existential situation. So it may be time to take stock and see what existentialism has to offer, hardly of course by way of a cure, but perhaps by way of a reorientation, for in your reporter's humble opinion Sartre has made good his claim: existentialism is another humanism.<sup>3</sup>

The strict Kierkegaardians nowadays, i.e. the men who are trying to translate his thought and example into action appealing to our generation, are mostly theologians. Sartre and those around him, for the same purpose, are cultivating the drama and the novel. It seems legitimate, then, that we whose mandate is the study of literature look in the green fields of literature, in their broadest expanse, to see what contribution existentialism has to make. Our aim is not to propagandize anything, but to gather evidence, to analyze, to compare, to interpret, and perhaps to evaluate. There are several ways of going about this task. To begin with, one might want to examine the attitude in theory and in practice of some outstanding existentialists towards the meaning and function of literature. It is a different matter when we seek to establish the influence which the existentialist approach, historically speaking, may have had on individual writers. But as pointed out at the outset, there was existentialist thinking long before Kierkegaard ever coined the phrase, so it seems pertinent to look for situa-

<sup>3</sup> See his book, *Existentialism*, tr. by B. Frechtman, New York, 1947, originally a lecture, *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, given in Paris in 1945.



tions and problems of an existentialist character anywhere in the literature of the ages. In this way new light may be shed on individual authors both in order to obtain a deeper understanding of their *Gestalt*, of the inner laws of their creative processes, and in order to estimate their substance more coherently, more congruously than is possible under the standard categories. All studies of this type must of course be controlled by whatever else we may know on the subject in a given case. So the final question would concern existentialism and the whole roster of the aims and methods of literary criticism, including the difficult problem of getting beyond the individual author to the study of groups and periods in a new history of thought. It lies outside the scope of this paper to try to cover all of these topics if only by way of a sketch. We must be satisfied with some illustrations, or applications, which may further elucidate what existentialism, as it concerns a literary man, appears to signify.

First of all, then, there is Søren Kierkegaard, a master of literary expression, endowed with a rich artistic temperament, a penetrating psychologist, a man who felt the inner conflicts in the soul of his fellow-man as poignantly as he experienced them in his own: a man, in other words, who had all the makings of a great novelist or, better yet, a great dramatist—and who did not choose the drama, who deliberately turned his back upon the aesthetic life that he could have had, and definitely chose to be a religious writer only. To be sure, his "Diary of the Seducer" would be accepted anywhere as a splendid piece of creative writing, but disregarding his personal involvement in it, he assigned it its place in his great treatise *Either—Or* to refute any attempt at a solution of the human problem on nothing but the aesthetic plane. In fact, Kierkegaard took this stand with Plato, with Boethius, in emphatically condemning the poet altogether. A curious phenomenon, which may partly be accounted for by the snug bourgeois appeal of the literature of his own post-Romantic period, but better perhaps by the imperative command of the voice within him. Nevertheless, the dramatic-psychological device which he invented to deliver his message to Christendom by way of "indirect communication" proved to be one of the most fruitful for drama and novel in times to come. What Kierkegaard in effect invented was the "existential situation," i.e., a situation in which the individual is really forced to take account of the ultimate reality of his own self. The story of Abraham about to sacrifice his own son Isaac may help again to illumine what is meant. No dream-world here, no escapism, no retreat upon the universal which would characterize the tragic hero as envisaged, e.g., by Schiller: nothing but the absolute necessity to come to a decision about his own self with the inner certainty that eternity is at stake, an affirmation of his true relation to the infinite. And he is alone, in absolute isolation, there is no one to help him make up his mind, no priest, no Bible, only the voice of God—but is it God? And then, most paradoxically, there is faith.

We are not committed to accept Kierkegaard's metaphysical attitude, but the significance of the "existential situation" is hardly lost on us. Without this background I dare say a large part of the work of Jean-Paul Sartre appears almost unintelligible. Whether his drama is good drama, compared, let us say, with that of Giraudoux, does not concern us here. The fact is he consciously, programmatically gives up the drama of plot and character to replace it by a drama of situation which enables him to lay bare the inner processes of a number of people in a given—situation. An extreme situation, as you have it, e.g., in *Morts sans sépulture* where there is business of torturing on the open stage—without any Puccini music to make us forget the stark reality. The explanation is not sensationalism but—existentialism. If this be a perversion of art, "very well," says Sartre in effect, "make the most of it." For Sartre is tired of the hypocritical humanitarianism of a Rousseau who sent his own children to an orphanage. In other words, however justified the principle of art for art's sake was in its own day and age, those days are over, literature must *s'engager*, must accept its obligation to interpret life as it is found in our day and age, life in the raw that has to be mastered. Without a doubt existentialism here takes on the colors of activism, even of propagandism, but if the author is sincere it still has for its aim nothing but the presentation of the facts that by "indirect communication," i.e. artistically, will enable us to find our way in the moral chaos of the modern world, each one of us by himself. Of course, Sartre too, like so many French authors before him, wants to *épater le bourgeois*, but not as an amusing pastime: he wants to shock our sensibilities into an acceptance of our Kantian duty as human beings. Or, to look at his performance from another angle: with all his display of the sordid, the slimy, the shiftless, the shameless, he holds no brief for the Naturalist—for Naturalism, with the stress it lays on heredity and environment, tends to excuse us for what we are. Sartre wants us to realize and face what we are and take up our burden, each one of us his own. He no more than Kierkegaard wants a tragic hero who by his agony or death would reestablish the moral cosmos according to a preconceived notion. No such appeal, no patriotic appeal is intended, but merely a demonstration of the necessity of choosing one's own self in good faith as a type or symbol of humanity, affirming humanity as the ultimate value.

The juxtaposition of Kierkegaard and Sartre may make it possible to take in at a glance what role existentialist concepts have played in the one hundred years of literature separating them. From among quite a few names that come to mind, let us single out only one, Henrik Ibsen, for a few brief remarks. Any one who remembers the slogan of Ibsen's *Brant*, "All or Nothing," must instantly feel reminded of Kierkegaard who coined a similarly uncompromising formula, "Either—Or." Now it is a fact, dutifully explored by literary historians, that Ibsen vehemently denied any direct influence from the Danish prophet, and we acknowledge that, in a



literal sense, he was right, for in the realm of the Christian faith he was, later on, even antagonistic to him. But nobody can create a Brant in the image of a pronounced Kierkegaardian like Pastor Lammers without fully realizing what the fight was all about. Ibsen's attack upon the pillars of society as we have it in at least half a dozen of his plays seems inconceivable without Kierkegaard's "Attack upon Christendom." The point is that while Kierkegaard was for a while all but forgotten after 1855, the substance of his teaching began to act like a leaven in the public life of the Scandinavian countries, and as the modernization of society progressed, he came into his own. What the two men have in common is particularly and conspicuously the passion with which they demand a decision: no shams, no subterfuges, honesty in all human relations, particularly in love and marriage and in matters of a personal religion. That the Norwegian ridiculed a Kierkegaardian pastor in *Ghosts*: probably true, but that argument cuts both ways; that the "ideal demand" might be presented by a fool, he doubtless became aware of too, but for all that *The Wild Duck* did not signify a retreat, but a warning. Quite apart, however, from all disputes over "influence," who would deny that Ibsen was a great dramatist in his own right and would have used basic Kierkegaardian concepts even if the Danish religious leader had never lived? The whole trend in the fashioning of the new drama in the 19th century was toward the concrete, the directly experienced, i.e., it was existentialist, and Ibsen's *Enemy of the People* or his *Lady from the Sea* may be used to illustrate that an "existential situation" does not necessarily have to be extreme, let alone outrageous, in terms of everyday life.

This takes us to the next question we have to touch upon, restricting the discussion to the drama because it offers the most fertile field for our considerations. The drama as such, by its very nature, evidently calls for an existentialist approach, for it is built around conflict and it calls for decisions in some way or other which, if we are dealing with good drama, are supposed to come not simply out of the dramatist's own, if innermost convictions, but plausibly out of the very characters he has created, usually involving the assumption of an existential responsibility. It certainly is possible and profitable to see Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in this perspective. The "terrible isolation" which results from the task imposed upon the prince is particularly characteristic. Schiller's dramas on the other hand, especially the later ones, are plainly non-existentialist,<sup>4</sup> for in all of them it is not difficult to see that the essence, the philosophic speculation (in the early works Rousseau, later Kant), precedes the experience involved in the process of dramatic creation. In an artist, the creative experience must be existential. Goethe, e.g., although congenitally and consciously he also had intentions dictated by the universal, repeatedly created in an existentialist spirit:

<sup>4</sup> But cf. now Ludwig W. Kahn's stimulating discussion of *Wilhelm Tell* in "Freedom: An Existentialist and an Idealist View," *Publications of the Mod. Lang. Assn.*, LXIV (1949), 5 ff.

*Egmont* shows traces of it, and especially *Iphigenia*. His most soul-stirring achievement in this respect, however, is Gretchen in the dungeon scene in his *Faust*. At the moment when Mephisto appears to speed up the escape she is restored to faith, choosing by an immediate reaction to her inmost being her "self," i.e. death and salvation, and this so suddenly in fact that it might symbolize a Kierkegaardian "leap." These examples could be multiplied. I wish to add only one name to my brief list, that of Heinrich von Kleist who died two years before Kierkegaard was born. Kleist has baffled his critics for over a hundred years in reference to the "school" to which he belongs. Was he a Romanticist? a classicist? an early realist? Now at last we see him yielding his secrets to an existentialist interpretation, and he was recently referred to in a New York weekly as a forerunner of Kafka. This may suffice.

There is one final matter that deserves comment, but by implication the answer is in a way already given. It should be clear, after all that has been said, that the existentialist test is particularly fit to help us find the clue to problems presented by individual writers. In this respect quite unexpected, un hoped-for insight may be gained. In particular it may enable us better to separate the chaff from the wheat, to tell the make-believe apart from the authentic, the traditional from the original. But since existentialism, Sartre's example notwithstanding, is not so much a philosophy as a fundamental attitude, it is not likely to revolutionize our methods, aims, and concerns in matters of a factual history of literature, but it will have to offer some corrections to the history of thought. For all this, sound factual knowledge is needed, thought is needed, and interpretative imagination is needed in many fields of critical endeavor. After all, Kierkegaard too was no intuitionist, no mystic, but for all the dramatics of his brief career a very learned man.

HENRY W. NORDMEYER

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## *Audio-Visual Aids in the Teaching of Russian\**

THE VISUAL AIDS COMMITTEE

THE AATSEEL Committee for Audio-Visual Aids was formed at the December, 1948 meeting in New York. It is worth noting that the motion upon which we acted at that time came from a teacher of the Romance languages who, as his paper indicated, "was looking at the Slavic languages." Our first reaction to the idea of a committee for audio-visual aids was mixed. If the assumption was that the teacher of Russian lacks materials for supplementing his work in language or civilization, we could prove that we have at our disposal a wealth of documents, films, discs, maps, pictures greater and more fascinating than those available in other foreign language fields. If the proposal meant, on the other hand, that we must indicate standard sources of such material, we felt that a visual aids committee would be a futile gesture, since the editions of pictures, discs, and films are necessarily limited. (The teacher who is not sufficiently concerned with visual aids to collect materials when they are available may find very little should he suddenly decide to illustrate a given project.) A more considered judgment in this matter, however, reminds us that Russian teaching in America is still in its infancy, and newcomers are entitled to benefit by the experience of pioneers. A policy of sharing information will help all teachers of Russian by furthering our general mission, which is the improvement of courses in Russian language and civilization for this country.

### PURPOSE

The general purpose of visual or audio-visual aids for teaching Russian is roughly the same as that for teaching other languages. The language teacher realizes that his subject is as complex as the civilization it represents. He therefore attempts to bring to his students a vivid sampling of the arts, the racial types, the religion, and other social phenomena of the country under consideration. There are language courses as barren as the rote memorization of a word list. Such courses rely on a frontal attack, and make no allowance for the nature of memory which is, as has been said, "not a muscle to be developed by repeated movements in a given direction, but

\* Report of Chairman of Audio-Visual Aids Committee to American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages at the Modern Language Association Convention, Stanford University, September 9, 1949.

rather a tissue of associations made stronger by the variety of those associations about a given idea." There are other language courses that give the student in *raccourci* a summer's membership in the foreign church choir, a season ticket to the theatre and opera of that country, a trip down the scenic valleys of its rivers, and *entrée* to the salons of its most brilliant intelligentsia. Such courses follow the tactic of envelopment, and make use of all devices that may further the student's understanding of the foreign culture or enrich his associations with the foreign language and literature. In Russian courses this embellishment is doubly important, since the student has little opportunity at present for a summer's tour in the area he is studying.

### MAPS

Maps and charts are perhaps the basic visual aids in foreign language teaching. An instructor is likely to overestimate the student's familiarity with the geography of foreign countries. How often have we heard the scandalized instructor relating the geographical "howlers" of our present-day student who thinks, for example, that Ontario is the capital of Canada. A greater economy of time could be effected by keeping a map in the classroom and orienting all discussion by an indication of the place on the foreign language map. Place names are usually good cognates, and help build the student's concept of a foreign country while adding to his active vocabulary. There is no excuse for mentioning any place name, regardless of how familiar it may seem to the instructor, without locating it on a map.

Good wall maps of the Soviet Union are once more available through agencies of *Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga* (in New York, Four Continents Book Corporation). The following are the most important: *Fizicheskaya Karta SSSR*, 1:5,000,000, 70"×52"; *Politico-Administrativnaya Karta SSSR*, 1:10,000,000, 36"×25"; and *Politico-Administrativnaya Karta Europeiskoi Chasti SSSR*, 1:2,000,000, 82"×64".

The wartime scarcity of maps from the Soviet Union emphasized the almost complete neglect of this area on the part of American mapmakers. Our largest maker of school maps has no map of the Soviet Union, although it has published a special edition of the upper half of its map of Asia under the title "Physical Map of the Soviet Union." The well-known geographical monthly which publishes maps of distant parts of the globe had never made a map of the Soviet Union until 1944. Its present edition with transliterated text is too small for classroom use. One of the editors of this periodical confessed to us that the paucity of material on post-revolutionary Russia in his magazine was due to a personal grudge of the owner based on some unpleasantness with Soviet customs officials. A representative of our largest American map publisher explained that they had no good maps of Russia "because the documents necessary for compiling maps of the Soviet Union are just not available." In reality, this scarcity is the result of a lack of in-

terest and a prejudice that could be costly to us either in war or in peace.

Russian cartography was quite advanced even in Tsarist times, with the *Five-Verst*, 1:210,000, and *Spets Map*, 1:420,000, series well developed by 1917. These maps, compiled for the General Staff, may not have been available to the general public, but they were extensively copied abroad, and formed the basis for later Soviet editions, such as the 1:1,000,000 and the 1:1,500,000 series. During the war, most of these editions were copied by our Army Map Service, Washington, D.C. Army Map Service publications are stamped "Not for Public Sale," but we have seen fairly complete collections of them in libraries of the Middle West, as well as at the Library of Congress.<sup>1</sup> The millionth series, drawn on the scale and index of the International Millionth Map Projection, was compiled by the Geographical Section of the British General Staff. It has been available since publication through London agents E. Stanford, Ltd., 12 Long Acre, W. C., Sifton Praed & Co., 67 St. James St. S. W., and T. Fisher Unwin, 1 Adelphi Ter. W. C. The price of the millionth map was 1 shilling, although increases in price may be expected.

While Soviet editions of the millionth and millionth and a half series are now restricted, it is occasionally possible to buy them from collectors who obtained them in Europe before the war. The same information with English text is available in Army Map Service publications. Since 1936 the Soviet government has ceased to exchange hydrographic information with western countries and has attempted to buy back the few copies of the *Bolshoi Atlas* that had been sold abroad. These gestures have created the impression among students that geographical information about the Soviet Union can be obtained only by spy methods. A visit to the map collection of an average large city library, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin Public Library, proved that this is not true. A more active demand on the part of language teachers would certainly increase the availability of geographical materials both through our public services and through the collections in college and city libraries.

#### PICTURES

Pictures from the foreign area can serve instructional purposes and at the same time stimulate interest in the study of the foreign language and culture. Some twenty years ago we studied geography under a learned doctor who had never been south of the Ohio River or west of the Mississippi, and whose eastern frontier was the Alleghenies. His physical isolation, however, did not appear to hamper him as he taught the geography of distant lands he had never visited. This man, whom I still consider an excellent teacher,

<sup>1</sup> The Army Map Service Collection is now distributed through the Library of Congress to over 100 designated depositories, chiefly university libraries. The Collection now includes over 1,000 maps not available through other sources.

put a high value on the ability to visualize the conditions we were studying, and treated pictures as an indispensable tool.

In the field of Russian studies, a long familiarity with pictures of people, places, and social activities can in a measure replace the first-hand experience of travelling in the foreign country. The pages of our leading illustrated weekly magazine have contributed many worthwhile reproductions of photographs and paintings during the past ten years. Copies of *Jhar Ptitzza*, the famous illustrated magazine of the early émigré period, are still available from the *Novoye Russkoye Slovo* in New York and from private collectors. We were fortunate enough to obtain from Four Continents several portfolios and books of reproductions of Russian paintings during the period 1941-43. For those instructors who have a special project or who wish to illustrate a textbook, the commercial agency for the Soviet Union is *Sovfoto*, 15 West 44th Street, New York City. In reply to our inquiry as to the extent of its files, *Sovfoto* replied:

We have a vast selection of photos dealing with all aspects of activity of the people of the Soviet Union, such as the different nationalities of the people, the geography, including lands, rivers, mountains, etc., of every part of the country . . . photos of important people such as heads of government, scientists, writers, artists, etc. . . . photos of children, education, hospitals, industry, agriculture, cultural activity, scientific laboratories, cinema, sports, etc. . . . photos of all important events that occur in the USSR. Our rates are \$6.00 per photo for publication use, and \$3.00 when photos are used for other purposes. Occasionally when photos do not have to be out of our office for a long period, we make arrangements for a rental fee.

The Library of Congress has a growing collection of prints and photographs that would be particularly helpful to those interested in pre-revolutionary Russia. A complete photo-duplication service is maintained by the library, with prices from 15 cents for 4×5 prints to \$2.00 for 16×20, where the negative exists. A charge of \$1.50 is made for special negatives.

The outstanding acquisition of the Library of Congress collection is a set of 2,500 glass negatives for 3-color prints. The negatives are in perfect condition and should be a treasure of pre-revolutionary documents when made available to the public. A description of this acquisition is given in the Library of Congress *Quarterly of Current Acquisitions*, Vol. 6. Nov., 1948, No. 1:

The name Prokudin-Gorsky appeared in the technical literature of color photography forty years ago in connection with specialized chemical developments. But Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorsky was also a practicing photographer of resource, and he was fortunate in obtaining an audience with the Tsar in order to interest him in the potentialities of the results in color then being perfected. So impressed was the Tsar that he awarded Prokudin-Gorsky an imperial commission to survey the Russian Empire in natural color, and ordered for him a special railroad car, half living quarters and half darkroom, and a pass to allow this rolling labora-



tory to be coupled to any train in Russia. Prokudin began work in 1909 and apparently continued only until 1911. Although the total does not begin to cover the Russian Empire, there are at least seven special survey projects which he executed systematically during this period . . . . All together he produced over 2,500 sets of 3-color separation plates, all on glass . . . . Miraculously, he was able to leave Russia, taking with him 21 wooden cases containing these negatives, and eventually established himself in Paris, where he died in 1943. The negatives were left in the possession of his two sons, who are now operating a professional photographic studio in Paris. The seven areas covered are: (1) the area traversed by the Murman Railway; (2) the historical area of the Napoleonic Wars; White Russia, Smolensk, etc.; (3) the Ural Mountains; (4) the area of the Marinsky Canal system; (5) the Volga River basin; (6) the Caucasus, and (7) Turkestan. In each case, the subjects include notable buildings, particularly churches, street scenes, railroads, local industries . . . especially interesting mural details, icons, book covers, silverware . . . . There are only occasional figures, and no movement, probably because the three exposures were made separately. Many of the monuments have since been destroyed . . . .

Perhaps the best series of pictures on the period of the Russo-Japanese War is to be found in the pages of *l'Illustration*. Although the half-tone had not yet been invented, the excellent engravings in the French weekly testify to a diligent coverage of the Russian area.

The use of pictures in the classroom or for lecture or club activities will depend on the type of class and the traditions of the school. Where the instructor has a moderate interest in photography he will make lantern slides of the 3×4 type or 35 mm. transparencies either in black and white or in color. We have found that ordinary equipment and skill can produce excellent kodachromes at a cost of 15 to 20 cents per print.

#### LANGUAGE RECORDS

The importance of language records has been properly appreciated during recent years, but many instructors are unable to use existing material profitably. Obviously the language record cannot replace the teacher in the classroom; it can, however, supplement instruction by aiding the pupil in mim-mem work. For such activity the best exercises are those which further the assimilation of the classroom lessons. Non-related material on discs is helpful as supplementary study, but could better be replaced for intermediate and advanced pupils by "live" programs from the radio or the lecture platform. We have used inexpensive Wilcox-Gay recordings of short-wave programs for over ten years, and find them quite useful for improving comprehension. It must always be remembered that a student who can understand a native speaker in person may have difficulty in following recordings.

Recorded materials for the study of Russian are if anything superior to those in other languages. We shall mention five courses on discs. The Linguaphone, perhaps the best known of language recordings, has a conversa-



tion course of 30 ten-inch sides by five native speakers, one of them a woman. The material is varied in character and speed. None of the recordings exceeds 265 syllables per minute, which means that with practice a learner can soon anticipate words that may have seemed elusive at first. For the more advanced student Linguaphone has an additional set of discs by Mrs. Semeonova from the text of her *Brush Up Your Russian*, published in the U.S.A. by McKay of Philadelphia. Another British set of particular interest was recorded by S. C. Boyanus to accompany his text, *Spoken Russian, a Practical Course*, London, Sidgwick and Jackson, 1938. The 35 texts of the course take up 24 sides on His Master's Voice records by the Gramophone Co., Ltd. A remarkable feature of the Boyanus course is the complete phonetic analysis that accompanies each text. They are printed in three columns, giving the written text, the spoken or phonetic text in international script, and the intonation curves after the method of Daniel Jones and Miss L. E. Armstrong. At the bottom of the page a translation of the Russian text is given. The Boyanus course is certainly the most complete that could be devised. Its technical phases would not be of much use to a student unfamiliar with linguistic tools; for the experienced language student it should prove a great help in the study of Russian. A final European contribution to Russian language recordings is the *Assimil* course of twenty records made in France. When you meet a Frenchman aboard he will probably tell you he learned his English, Spanish, Italian, German, or whatever language he is speaking by the *Assimil* method. The *Méthode* consists of about a hundred lessons in which grammar study plays a minor rôle. The assumption is that the grammar will come after the student is familiar with a given language pattern. Each lesson consists of a conversation (on record) followed by exercise (not on record). The native speakers are two in number, male and female. The speed varies from rather slow to quite fast. An experienced teacher of French and Spanish who has used Linguaphone, USAFI and *Assimil* tells us he prefers the *Assimil* recordings. The most recent contribution to Russian language recordings is the USAFI material which appeared toward the end of the wartime Intensive Language Programs. The 24 twelve-inch double-sided Russian USAFI discs were recorded by Mr. A. Pressman. In contrast to some of the other USAFI sets, which tend to be very rapid, the Pressman recordings are read at moderate speed with very clear enunciation. One of the important features of the USAFI discs is the pause which permits the learner to repeat each exercise as it is read, the sequence being: English speaker, Russian speaker, pause, Russian speaker repeats, pause. For learners who prefer to practice "thinking in the foreign language" from the start, the presence of the English speaker is a distraction. The review or "listening in" passages, which are entirely in the foreign tongue, provide a partial remedy for this defect. The vocabulary load of USAFI Russian is much smaller than that of any of the other four recorded courses.

It is, however, very carefully chosen, and represents a good minimum vocabulary for a beginner by the oral-aural method. Since the war, this set has been handled commercially by Henry Holt & Company.

The library of Russian song is particularly extensive, due to the direct appeal of Russian music to the average listener. Operatic, military, religious, folk and art songs of all kinds can serve to illustrate a course in literature or stimulate club activities. As is the case with all recordings, it is difficult to find copies of certain very fine interpretations since the manufacturer is too much concerned with pressings of current numbers to consider repressing old recordings. However, the following labels afford a wide selection of excellent renditions: Victor, Columbia, Decca, Standard-Victor, Stinson, Soviet, Keynote, Musicraft. Adequate treatment of this subject would require a fair-sized manual; hence we shall consider the details elsewhere.

#### FILMS

The most valuable but at the same time the most neglected of audio-visual aids is the foreign language film. In our own experience, we have found that a foreign film studied several times gives a more varied and authentic listening experience than can be gained by any other method. Conversation with a native is necessarily limited to a few commonplace subjects, with the native speaker usually talking down to us. Our language instructors are apt to use a classroom diction too much at variance with everyday speech in the foreign tongue. How the film can be effectively used in the classroom is another matter. The full-length feature is desirable, but rather unwieldy. Some dialogue scene of about 10 or 15 minutes' duration could be projected once and would allow time for discussion and analysis by the class, and a second projection before the end of the classroom period. Where circumstances permit, several showings of a feature picture or documentary will provide opportunity for the student to test his comprehension outside of the restricted sphere of the classroom. A further possibility for repetition is found in recordings from the sound track of Russian films. A complete recorded version of *Ballerina* is now available, as are excerpts from other well-known films.

Teachers of Russian are faced with a dilemma when they consider the use of available foreign films. The low rental cost and wide selection of Soviet films available from *Artkino* in New York certainly puts us in an excellent position to use motion pictures for club or classroom work. If 35mm. projectors are not available, nearly all of the 90-odd feature films and over a hundred documentaries and short subjects are available in 16mm. reprints through Brandon Films of New York. On the other hand, the teacher of Russian must expect to meet the charge of using Soviet propaganda material. In this regard, he should point out bluntly that all Soviet films are made to serve propaganda aims, and that a clear realization of

this fact is one of the goals of his course. If it is deemed unwise to use Soviet films under these circumstances, the choice is obvious: Don't use films. However, the fact that these films do enable us to penetrate the Iron Curtain for a moment even if it is to see a glorified version of the life behind it would seem to warrant their use by serious American students.

A recent film in color, *Song of Siberia*, gives us an absorbing study of Russian faces on a musical background of haunting folk music. The propaganda line that the artist must find his strength in the people and must share his art with them is obvious enough and could serve as an introduction to one of the Communists' basic social themes. Suitably developed, it could explain much of the party discipline we read about in the news of Soviet Russia.

An alternative course is to make our own films for language instruction. One interesting short suitable for club use was made by Warner Brothers some years ago. It depicts the Jharoff Don Cossacks in their native setting around a campfire while they sing selections from their concert repertoire. Other films could be made in America if the demand were sufficient. Certainly those of us who make our own films could work out a documentary for purposes of introducing the subject and selling it to the prospective public. Miss Anne McSpadden, a member of Aatseel, recently sent us an essay entitled "Suggestions for the Making of an Educational Film for the Slavic Language Department." Copies are available either from Miss McSpadden or from the author of the present paper. If all this seems a bit high-powered for the academic mind, just remember that it will take a lot of missionary work on the part of American teachers before the Russian language achieves the place it merits in our schools and colleges.

In concluding this paper, we admit that we have given the barest outline of the possibilities of the subject. The details must depend on the given situation of each individual teacher. After all, the teacher and his course are the basic factors in language instruction. Audio-visual aids can help him create a more vivid impression or save time in the rote phases of learning. The teacher who succumbs to gadgetitis or uses aids merely because it is the fashionable thing to do has missed the boat completely. There is nothing new about visual or audio-visual aids. We have used them in one form or another all our lives. As an old-fashioned language teacher who recorded the radio speeches of Hitler and De Gaulle for our language classes in the thirties and later wrote out the text of Russian sound films in the obscurity of little cinema houses, we are pained to see educational racketeers break into print with new methods of teaching language by electronics or by converting administrators to the wisdom of replacing instructors by language records.

Teachers of Russian are particularly concerned with audio-visual aids because of certain peculiar features of their subject. Russians are by nature

a dramatic people, and have left us vigorous expression in music, the theatre, and the graphic arts. The appeal of these phases of Russian culture to the American student is direct and instantaneous. We cannot recall a single student of ours who failed to become an amateur of Russian folk music. Soviet isolationism makes it imperative that we exploit all manner of realia and documents in our efforts to make up for the lack of first-hand contacts with the foreign area. The final criterion of audio-visual aids is the one we apply to all teaching tools: Do they further the maintenance and development of the acquired skill once our pupil leaves the course? Without minimizing the value of a reading habit in the foreign language, our experience tells us that those students who develop a taste for foreign language records or who listen to the Voice of America and foreign broadcasts are on their way to a mastery of the foreign tongue.

CLAUDE P. LEMIEUX

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#### PATTERN

Distant star,  
Brilliant sun,  
Life force—  
All are one

Bronzed native,  
White man, too,  
Stoic Indian—  
Which are you?

Black is brown,  
Brown is white—  
All are brothers  
In the night.

Let us turn  
The night to day,  
Let us cast  
Old hates away.

One is all,  
And all is one—  
Life force,  
Men, stars and sun.

—DOLORES MORGANSTON ALLEN

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## Paraguayan Literature of the Chaco War

ONLY fourteen years have passed since the last shot of the Chaco War was fired, but in the horror and suffering that the world has experienced since then, it has all but forgotten about this incident in history. Yet Bolivia and Paraguay are not likely soon to forget the war which cost them total casualties amounting to 250,000 men, an astounding figure if one considers the fact that the combined population of the two countries is not much over four million. For Bolivia the war was perhaps the most tragic of the long series of débâcles that have been the invariable outcome of the territorial disputes with neighboring states. Paraguay emerged victorious and jubilant, and abroad there was a general reaction of astonishment to this victory won over a nation more than three times as large and with more than three times the population of Paraguay. However, in the hour of jubilation there was occasion for deep sorrow and sober reflection over the loss of 30,000 Paraguayan lives coming as it did only a little more than sixty years after Paraguay had all but been annihilated in the War of the Triple Alliance.<sup>1</sup>

The origins of the territorial dispute that led to the Chaco War lie, in the main, within the province of the historian. For the student of literature it is sufficient to know that both Bolivian and Paraguayan claims to the Chaco may be traced back to early colonial times and that Paraguay also based its rights on actual occupation of parts of the territory. Boundaries between the two countries were a source of endless litigation.<sup>2</sup> In more recent times, the possibility of finding oil in the Chaco intensified the heat of the controversy. It is generally admitted that the Standard Oil Company had at least one finger in the Chaco pie, and that it gave Bolivia some substantial support in the war. There is repeated reference to this in both Bolivian and Paraguayan writers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Before the war with Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay, the population of Paraguay exceeded one million. After the war the total population was estimated to be 229,000 and the male survivors numbered only 29,000.

<sup>2</sup> Anyone who visits Paraguayan bookstalls is likely to come away with the impression that Paraguayan literature might have been much richer if writers had cultivated such literary forms as the novel, drama, and the short story with the same ardor they displayed in writing about boundary disputes with Bolivia.

<sup>3</sup> The Standard Oil Company has repeatedly denied the charges, but its activities were so open to suspicion as to bring down the wrath of the late senator Huey P. Long of Louisiana. Long's diatribe against the Standard Oil Company, delivered from the floor of the U. S. Senate was gratefully received in Paraguay and induced the Paraguayans to rename one of the forts captured from the enemy "Senador Long." See: Gordon Ireland, *Boundaries, Possessions, and Conflicts in South America*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1938, p. 94.

To the average Paraguayan the war was simply a patriotic defense of his homeland against Bolivian aggression. He went willingly to the Chaco to fight because he believed in the justice of his cause, and because he had inherited the ardent loyalty to country common to all Paraguayans. People who were in Asunción during the war say that the departure of the Paraguayan soldiers for the front was festive and gay. Normally they embarked on river boats that took them northward on the Paraguay River to ports or bases from which they proceeded by land to the areas where the fighting was going on. Some of the soldiers carried their guitars with them, and the embarkation was an occasion for music, song, and rejoicing. The Paraguayans seem never to have been daunted by the enemy's superiority in manpower, wealth, and equipment.

There is a remarkable contrast between this attitude and the Bolivian one, at least as the latter is reflected in Bolivian writers of the Chaco War. In the Bolivian literature there is an undercurrent of disillusionment and tragic irony. The easy victory that had been expected did not materialize, and people began to doubt and question. The war went on month after month, year after year, until the Bolivians were driven out of the Chaco and found themselves fighting a defensive war on their own soil. Bolivian writers accused politicians and military leaders of misconduct of the war, pouring out their vitriol over President Salamanca and General Kundt in particular. As for the Indians who made up the largest percentage of Bolivia's population, there was little reason for them to show any enthusiasm over a war conducted by the white and mestizo masters who had long oppressed them. In some instances they even revolted against conscription.<sup>4</sup>

Bolivians may wring some consolation from the fact that although they were driven out of the Chaco, the war inspired some of their men of letters to write works of real merit. If the war had been a literary one, in which victory was determined by the superiority of the literature produced, Bolivia would have been the victor.<sup>5</sup> Paraguay produced nothing equal, for instance, to Augusto Cespedes' *Sangre de mestizos*, a collection of stories which has already become one of the classics of Latin-American literature. However, it would be unfair to conclude that nothing has been written in Paraguay that is worthy of mention.<sup>6</sup> There are a number of works which should be of interest to any student of Latin-American letters.

The best novel of the Chaco War written by a Paraguayan author, it is

<sup>4</sup> Ireland, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> For an interesting article, principally on Bolivia's literary activity during and after the war, see: "Literature of the Chaco War" by Willis Knapp Jones, in *Hispania*, February, 1938, Vol. XXI, No. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Historians of Latin-American literature ordinarily have little to say about Paraguay. It is customary to dismiss Paraguayan literature with the assertion that little is known about it beyond the borders of Paraguay itself, or the insinuation that there is little about it that is worth knowing.



generally conceded, is *Ocho Hombres* by José S. Villarejo. As a youth Villarejo had studied in Spain but he had returned to his native country before the outbreak of the war. He became a reserve officer and was in the thick of the fighting during the war. It is evident in the novel that the author is describing scenes with which he was familiar. There is an abundance of realistic detail that would probably have escaped a writer whose knowledge of the war was not based on actual experience. In general, the descriptive and documentary detail is used effectively, although there is an occasional passage in which there appears to be more than is necessary in the way of recital of prosaic trivialities. What is laudable in the author's narrative manner is its sobriety, its evident purpose of representing things as they were, without any false drama or overtones of sensationalism.

The novel is a simple account of the experiences of eight soldiers who have been sent out to patrol enemy positions. Their participation in the war is not spectacular or heroic, and they die rather ignominiously before their mission has been fulfilled. The main characters of the novel are Sergeant Anastasio Martínez and his attendant, Cucharita. The former was actually a fugitive from justice, having been forced to flee from his native village after killing a drunken ruffian who had insulted him. Cucharita was in the war more or less by accident. The laziness and roguery of the attendant are reminiscent of the *pícaro* of Spanish literary tradition, and suggest that the author may have been familiar with Spanish picaresque novels.

There are occasional sparks of humor in *Ocho Hombres*, sometimes struck off by Cucharita's antics or his loquacity and sometimes resulting from the author's whimsy of expression. Cucharita, on one occasion frightened out of his wits by a shell that exploded not far away, runs head-on into a tree or as the author puts it: "cierto árbol mal intencionado se le puso por delante. . . ." These episodes sometimes descend to a low level of farce in which noses are punched promiscuously and people fall headlong into mud or other matter of like consistency and worse odor.

Although, in the main, the author writes in an unaffected straightforward manner, there are from time to time curious inconsistencies, as if he felt that some peculiar literary elegance could be achieved by an occasional lapse into verbosity and a sort of Gongoristic affectation. The reader may well wonder if any esthetic end is served in referring to an automobile as an "estruendoso artefacto," or if the author has not slightly overstepped the bounds of the judicious in expressing himself in such terms as the following:

"La canícula ornó tu límpida frente con el modesto fulgor de saladas gotitas."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Villarejo, José S., *Ocho hombres*, Asunción, 1934, p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> *Idem*, p. 20.



"Ya la atmósfera se había puesto de luto cuando llegó."<sup>9</sup>

Once the narrative is actually under way and the author is dealing with life at the front, he wisely abandons both the farcical elements and the absurd figures of speech. Now he writes with sincerity and a sure knowledge of his facts, and he is able to create a work of some merit out of what could easily have become a volume of unreadable trash. The total effect of the novel is to present a well-drawn picture of the life of the Paraguayan soldier at the front.

Villarejo is also the author of a collection of four short stories in two of which the Chaco War serves as a background. The collection takes its name from the title of the first story, "*Hoooh lo saiyoby*."<sup>10</sup> The protagonist of this story is a young Spaniard who is serving as a volunteer reserve officer in the Paraguayan army. He is obsessed with the idea of recovering two heavy machine guns that have been abandoned in an exposed area raked by fire from both Paraguayan and Bolivian positions. Every attempt by either side to gain possession of the two guns has resulted in the death of every participant in the raid. The Spaniard, not to be dissuaded by anyone, exposes himself to what appears to be certain death, but he manages to execute his plan and return safely to the Paraguayan trenches. Some time later when the firing on both sides has ceased and all danger appears to be past, he is killed by a stray bullet. The theme of the story is little different from that of dozens of other war stories, yet the author has contributed something authentically Paraguayan in his concise but effective characterizations of the common Paraguayan soldier.

"Nostalgia," the second war story of the collection, also concerns a foreign officer, a Russian<sup>11</sup> in the Paraguayan army, but here again the setting is Paraguayan, and it is for the tranquility of a little village in his adopted country that the war-weary Russian longs. In this story, as in Villarejo's other war fiction, the emphasis is not on the glamorous or heroic aspects of warfare but on the fatigue, the petty irritations, and the overpowering feeling of futility and boredom that eventually deadens even the awareness of danger.

The indignation of many Paraguayans was aroused in 1934 by the publication of a novel called *Cruces de quebracho*. The author, Arnaldo Valdivinos, is a lawyer, writer, and politician of revolutionary ideas. He has not consistently supported any single political creed or philosophy, but has run the whole gamut of "isms" during his career. Volatile as he has been in politics, he has the reputation of being affable and unassuming in his per-

<sup>9</sup> *Idem*, p. 31.

<sup>10</sup> Willis Knapp Jones has aptly translated this title: "whiz go the bullets." *Saiyoby* is the name of a bird which in flight makes a sound much like the whine of a stray bullet.

<sup>11</sup> A number of Russian Czarist officers who had established their residence in Paraguay served with the Paraguayan army during the Chaco War.

sonal associations. He has been an important figure in the public affairs of his country, among other positions of high responsibility having held that of cabinet minister under Morinigo.

*Cruces de quebracho* is an impassioned denunciation of war. It is probable that Valdovinos, like a number of other war writers, was influenced by Erich Maria Remarque's *All is Quiet on the Western Front*, but his rather ruthless exposure of certain problems peculiar to his own country, make it evident that it was mainly grievances that affected himself and his compatriots that he wished to censure. The plot revolves about three students who are pacifists by conviction and soldiers by accident. Without having taken any initiative themselves, they find themselves on the way to the front in the interior of the Chaco. Their life is a nightmare of long marches, blistering heat, and thirst that drives men mad. In their conversations, the three protest constantly against the folly of war, but when the crucial moment arrives they do their duty as faithfully as any others. Two of them are killed in action. Rolando, who might be termed the *raisonneur* of the novel, delivers a long tirade against war as he lies wounded and dying.

As a novel, *Cruces de quebracho* is not an outstanding work. What narrative there is has simply served as a medium through which the author expresses his own convictions. The final product comes as close to being a sermon as a novel. Nevertheless it has an intensity that does not permit the reader's interest to lag. There are elements of pathos that reveal a profound sympathy for the obscurity and suffering of the common soldier. Those who have called *Cruces de quebracho* an unpatriotic book have probably failed to detect the author's honest concern over the welfare of his people, or they have chosen to interpret it as obvious political propaganda.

In 1935 there appeared, presumably in Asunción, a work entitled *El "Iris" de la paz o Los mercaderes de Ginebra en el Chaco Boreal*. Neither the name of the publisher nor the place of publication is given, and the author has concealed his identity under the pseudonym "Ivanhoe." All that can be said with certainty is that he is Paraguayan. He classifies his work as an historical novel, but it places some strain on the reader's imagination to find any accuracy in this designation. There remains the inconsistency that the work bears little resemblance either to history or novel. It is a violent denunciation of the work of the commission chosen by the League of Nations to arbitrate the Chaco dispute and bring hostilities between Bolivia and Paraguay to an end.

In the prologue the author explains that he had intended to write "un libro apasionado," but that deference to social convention has led him to write in a gentler vein. It is left to the reader to catch the insinuations and read between the lines. The thesis of his work is that the League of Nations is an organization dedicated to the promotion of the munitions industries of the larger nations that make up its membership. Having established this

point, the author relates the experience of the five commissioners of peace, whom he names and identifies as a Spanish bullfighter, an unknown Englishman, a French usurer, an Italian restaurant keeper, and a Mexican hatter. Traveling with their secretaries, advisers, and stenographers, generously provided by the League of Nations with spending money, they form a gay company. There is only one cloud on their horizon, and that is the possibility that Paraguay may win the war before they arrive and thus frustrate their plans. As they disembark in Rio de Janeiro, thousands of monkeys greet them fraternally from the coconut palms. The pleasure excursion continues later up the Paraguay River, as the commissioners stuff themselves with costly victuals and saturate themselves with alcoholic beverages on board the luxurious river boat, "Iris." Occasionally they go ashore to deliver a speech, this duty falling inevitably to the Spaniard, since he is the only delegate who speaks Spanish. The Frenchman insists that the speaker shed a few tears on each occasion. Although the Spaniard does his best to comply, he finds it hard work, and eventually declares with a resounding curse that he is through shedding tears.

There is not a page of the volume without a sarcastic jibe, an insult, or an obscene anecdote about the peace commissioners. The Bolivians are variously described as gorillas and "indios hediondos." The reader is left to wonder what the book might have turned out to be if the author had pursued his original intention of writing without restraint. It is well perhaps that he chose the manner of gentle insinuation. With all its excesses, there is some penetrating irony and sardonic wit in the volume. What merit it might have possessed as a work of inspired patriotism is lost by the author's obvious unfairness.

During the Chaco War, the newspapers of Asunción carried a series of stories or sketches supposedly written by a Bolivian soldier. People read them with interest and were wont to remark, "How well they write up there" (in Bolivia). In 1940 a collection of these sketches was published in Asunción in a book bearing the title *Arma al brazo*. The author, who used the pseudonym, Lheri Mirror, turned out to be, not a Bolivian, but a Paraguayan doctor, César Gagliardone, who had served as a captain in the medical corps during the war. Since the war, he has been an important figure in the scientific and political affairs of his country. At one time he held office in the presidential cabinet as Minister of Public Health. He has traveled extensively in Latin America and attended numerous scientific conferences.

Dr. Gagliardone's war sketches were written in camp hospitals at the front. From anyone whose life must have been so profoundly touched by the drama and tragedy of war, and whose experiences were recorded on the very scene, one could logically expect a certain amount of incoherence and a lack of literary polish, but it is disappointing to find that the sketches

do not vibrate with the intensity of the lived experience. The stories in the first part concern themselves principally with action at the front—attacks, counterattacks, triumphs, defeats, with their usual emotional accompaniment of courage, optimism, fear, despair, and reflections on the futility of war, in short the stuff of which most war stories are made. It is as if the author deliberately chose to follow a conventional pattern rather than permit himself any spontaneity of expression. There is not a single episode that leaves more than a fleeting impression. There is a general atmosphere of matter-of-factness, and the frequent use of such adjectives as “salvaje” and “titánica,” rather than accentuating the dramatic effect, only serve to give the work a leaven of triteness and insipidity. The philosophizing about warfare, possibly inspired by the author’s reading of *All is quiet on the Western Front*, is of the most naïve sort:

“¡Cuántos libros, podrán escribirse sobre esta guerra! Cuántas tragedias anónimas, en los caminos y en los montes! Al ver, tantas vidas truncas, tantos cráneos esparcidos de un sitio a otro, se reflexiona en tiempos mejores, en días idos, que ya no volverán, como las golondrinas de Bécquer!”<sup>12</sup>

In the second part of the collection the author abandons the indirect narrative and relates what appear to be his own experiences. In spite of some recurrence of the defects already pointed out, these sketches are superior to those of the first part. They have a sincerity that the earlier ones lack. In them the author does not rely on the overworked machinery of action but attempts rather to catch the atmosphere and reproduce the emotional climate of ordinary scenes and events. He writes, for instance, of the arrival of a mail truck at the front, and the reactions of joy or disappointment of the soldiers as letters are distributed; of the emotions experienced on a visit to a town captured a year before from the enemy; of the feeling of unreality that possesses him on his return to Asunción after a long absence at the front. These experiences are related simply, and have a spontaneity and a flavor of authenticity that is not present in part one of the collection.

The success of the Paraguayan soldiery in the field can be attributed in part to the support received from the loyal civilian population at home. The contribution of the Paraguayan women was especially important. During the Chaco War they reacted with the same courage and devotion they had displayed in the days of Francisco Solano López.<sup>13</sup> Production not only was maintained, but it even surpassed the pre-war level, thanks mainly to the efforts of Paraguay’s industrious and capable women. At the outbreak of

<sup>12</sup> Mirror, Lhery, *Arma al brazo*, Asunción, 1940, p. 38.

<sup>13</sup> In the defense of Piribebuy (1869) during the War of the Triple Alliance, Paraguayan women participated in the final stages of the battle. For lack of more effective weapons with which to fight, they threw sand into the eyes of the enemy soldiers, and assailed them with bottles and broken glass.

the war the Paraguayan army was poorly equipped and clothed, but the women, with an industry and enthusiasm that matched the drive of the soldiers at the front, gave of their time, their resources, and their energy until this initial handicap was largely overcome.<sup>14</sup> They contributed generously with food, money, clothing, and unrelenting toil. The epic of this phase of the war has been written in the form of personal sketches by Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez-Alcalá.

The writer is of a distinguished old family, prominent in the affairs of the country ever since the days of the Conquest. Before the Chaco War, she had already won literary recognition with her two volumes of intimate sketches entitled *Tradiciones del hogar*. She had four sons who participated in the war, and she herself was president of the Paraguayan Red Cross during the war period. Her activities as head of the Red Cross were not limited to administrative details. She regularly visited the hospitals and did everything she could personally to help the wounded and the dying. One of her self-appointed tasks was to go from cot to cot talking to the wounded soldiers, writing letters for them, and carrying out other requests of theirs.

She spoke with the sympathy and understanding of a mother, usually addressing the soldiers in Guaraní, the language that they knew most intimately. It is of such experiences that Teresa Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez-Alcalá writes in her reminiscences of the war period. Her writings have a quality of warmth, tenderness, and sincerity that no other Paraguayan writer has achieved. The following example may be considered typical:

¡Y con que estoicismo morían aquellos muchachos después de sufrir en silencio! No se les oía un quejido. De uno de ellos me dijo un día el médico que le atendía: "Se muere ese herido a quien Ud. mima tanto." Acudí a su lado. Yo le mimaba porque era casi un niño y sus ojos tenían un gran parecido con otros muy amados de mi corazón. Le tomé la mano, que a fuerza de helada quemaba como un témpano. Puse en ella un crucifijo que el agonizante apretó temblorosamente contra su pecho. Luego se sumió en un sopor largo del que salió para tomar convulsivamente un escapulario que le pendía del cuello, mientras me dirigía una mirada en la que yo adiviné un mensaje que no pude descifrar. Me devolvió el crucifijo, se volvió hacia la pared frontera de su cama y expiró. Caf de rodillas y recé en voz baja, en nombre de su madre, a quien yo escribiera varias cartas. El doctor vino a mí y dijo: "¿Le dió su mensaje?—Quiso sin duda decirme algo, pero sólo pudo mirarme largamente. —Me dijo—agregó el doctor—que le pidiese un último favor: el de sacarle el escapulario y remitírselo a su madre que se lo colgó del cuello al partir para el Chaco." Yo cumplí este mandato.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The Paraguayan soldiers equipped themselves to a considerable extent with arms and other supplies captured from the enemy.

<sup>15</sup> Lamas Carísimo de Rodríguez-Alcalá, Teresa, "Emociones de la guerra del Chaco," in the newspaper, *La Tribuna*, Asunción, December, 1947.



Of the author's works published during the war, those that received widest acclaim were "Oyerebo Chaco-güf" (1934)?, a sympathetic treatment of the theme of the soldier returning from the front to his native village, and "El dolor de mi alegría" (1934) in which the writer describes her own emotions as she goes to the port to meet one of her sons who is returning from the front after a year spent on the battlefields of the Chaco. As the young soldier goes ashore to meet his mother, the latter gets a glimpse of another mother throwing her arms about a coffin that has been brought home on the same boat.

It is the genuineness of their emotional quality and the author's clarity and naturalness of style that will make these sketches endure. Themes that a writer of less sensibility might have developed into nothing better than hackneyed tales exuding sentimentality and mediocrity, the author has infused with an emotional intensity that makes them as vivid and moving as the experiences themselves. Teresa Lamas has been urged to have her articles, essays, and stories about the Chaco War published in Buenos Aires in collected form. The book has yet to appear, but when it does, it promises to be the most significant work written by any Paraguayan author about the Chaco War.

Other prose writers who have made use of the war theme are Pastor Urbietta Rojas, a young Paraguayan lawyer and politician, and Vicente Lamas, newspaper editor, philosopher and poet. The former is the author of *Estampas Paraguayas* (1942) a collection of historical anecdotes some of which deal with the Chaco War. They are the simplest kind of war-hero episodes—of which almost any country and any war must have produced a great abundance—without any particular literary merit. Vicente Lamas is the author of a story entitled "El Abogado,"<sup>16</sup> a dramatic tale of the mysterious power of an amulet worn by a humble soldier to protect himself from the enemy bullets. After enjoying its miraculous protection in all sorts of perilous situations, he lends it to a comrade who is about to be sent on a mission of extreme danger. The comrade returns safely but finds the owner of the amulet standing rigid and dead in the trench. The spot on his chest over which he had worn the amulet has been pierced by a bullet.

The majority of the works written about the Chaco War are in prose, but as one would naturally expect in any Latin-American country, poets also found a source of inspiration in war themes. The number of poems published undoubtedly was great, but probably the majority of them have already passed into oblivion. One could find them in back files of newspapers or magazines, although even some of the publications in which they were printed, having had the ephemeral existence that often characterizes Latin-American periodicals, long since died a premature death. Among the

<sup>16</sup> Published in *Leoplán*, Buenos Aires, 1936.

writers of war poems that have been preserved, one finds Julio Correa, better known as the author of popular dramas in the Guaraní language, Arnaldo Valdovinos, already referred to as the author of *Cruces de quebracho*, Basiliano Caballero Irala, Facundo Recalde, Juan Silvano Dfaz-Pérez. Undoubtedly there are others that deserve mention but whose works are out of print or otherwise unavailable.

What appears to be the most significant poetic contribution to the war literature is a collection of poems entitled *Estampas de la guerra*, published in 1939. The author is Hugo Rodríguez-Alcalá, a young Paraguayan writer who at the age of sixteen was commissioned a lieutenant in the reserves and saw action at the front. After the war he completed his education, receiving a doctorate in law from the National University of Asunción. In 1943 he came to the United States for two years of further study at the University of Wisconsin. Subsequently he held the position of secretary of the Supreme Court in his own country. In 1947 he returned again to the United States to assume the position of instructor of Spanish in an American college.

Both of Hugo Rodríguez-Alcalá's parents are prominent in the literary annals of Paraguay.<sup>17</sup> Thus the writer's talent and literary inclination came to him as a natural heritage. By the time he wrote *Estampas de la guerra* he was well steeped in the literary tradition of both France and Spain. However, in his war poems he has eschewed traditional forms and explored new possibilities. The results have on the whole been fortunate, for the poems have a spontaneity that they could scarcely have possessed if the impressions had been recast to fit conventional literary moulds. The author professes great admiration for *Sangre de mestizos* and evidently hoped to capture in his poetry something comparable to the tragic intensity of the stories by Augusto Cespedes.<sup>18</sup> Although he has received suggestions from the work of Cespedes he has not set out to imitate it. The impressions and experiences that furnished the inspiration for *Estampas de guerra* are the writer's own. The fact that the poems were actually written some four years after the end of the war probably worked to the author's advantage rather than against it. These four years enabled him to attain greater maturity and independence of thought. Had the poems been written during the war, or immediately after it, they might by now have been forgotten. The effect of seeing the war in retrospect has been to infuse the poems with a certain nostalgic quality that would have been lacking in on-the-scene reportorial sketches. This is particularly evident in such a poem as "Interior" in which

<sup>17</sup> His mother is Teresa Lamas Carlsimo de Rodríguez-Alcalá whose writings have been discussed above. His father, José Rodríguez-Alcalá is the author of learned books and articles on Paraguayan life and culture, and of stories of Paraguayan setting.

<sup>18</sup> During the Villarroel administration in Bolivia, Cespedes served as ambassador to Paraguay.



the author recalls almost with affection the old tent that served him as a shelter during his campaigns in the Chaco:

Vivía yo bajo una carpa  
en medio de la selva;  
bajo esa carpa yo he soñado  
en tibias noches y en ardientes siestas.

Mi catre de campaña  
con sus mantas y sábanas mugrientas,  
tenía ya la forma de mi cuerpo  
y conocía todas mis tristezas.<sup>19</sup>

Rodríguez-Alcalá has made no attempt to give his collection a thread of continuity. The poems are fragmentary reminiscences of scenes, individuals, and episodes of the war. The elements of violence and tragedy of war are present but they are not overdramatized. The occasional macabre and naturalistic touches are simply the reflection of realities of the author's experiences and do not impart a total effect of morbidity. The prevailing tone is one of lingering melancholy. Not only the war but the Chaco itself—just as in the case of Cespedes—left its deep mark on the poets' sensibility. The impressions are subjective but this personal quality and the author's sincerity in transmitting it to his poems constitute one of their chiefs merits. The short poem, "Picuiba" will, perhaps, serve as well as nay in the collection to give a synthesis of the work:

Jardín de Soledad. Hosco paisaje  
de lejanías infinitas.

Aún te puebla la muerte,  
y la Sed, y el Dolor, y la Agonía.

Aún vagan los fantasmas de los mártires  
sobre tus lomas amarillas.<sup>20</sup>

*Estampas de la guerra* seems destined to endure as one of the most important Paraguayan contributions to the literature of the Chaco War.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Rodríguez-Alcalá, Hugo, *Estampas de la guerra*, Asunción, 1939, p. 54.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, p. 40.

<sup>21</sup> Rodríguez-Alcalá has published a number of war poems in his collection of verse entitled *A la sombra del pórtico* (Asunción, 1942). The spirit, theme, and treatment of these would make their inclusion in *Estampas de la guerra* seem a logical one.

## *Activating the Passive in Language Teaching*

ONE of the marked tendencies in the teaching of modern foreign languages today is to emphasize what some call "activities" connected with our study. We encourage play production, club functions, social projects, allied cultural activities, community enterprises—anything, as a matter of fact, which we consider even remotely in rapport with the core center of language learning. And we may be right, for centrifugal though this motion be, at least it keeps things moving within the field, even if the motion is out from the center to the periphery.

But might we not ask two questions advisedly: Is not the activity of the classroom itself, the true language learning center, becoming more passive as a result? And, if so, how to make it more active?

With respect to the first question, are not the following considerations true? When one student translates, others sit by and half listen. When one group goes to the board, the others simply remain, dutiful but unoccupied, at their seats. When one student is speaking or reading French, let us say, do not many others simply half hear what is being said, just enough, in fact, to pick up the defects or peculiarities of pronunciation that are being disseminated?

Even though the answer to the first question be only a half-hearted "yes," let us go on to the second: how can we, in our teaching techniques, make the classroom more of an activity, more of an enterprise for more students more of the time? Here are a few practical suggestions that have been tried and that seem to work to some advantage.

When one student, or a group of students has finished translating, any student in the class should be expected to be called upon to correct any given paragraph or page of the translation. When students know that they will be asked to do this, they are more alert during the other fellow's translation than otherwise they would be. If not only the translator but the corrector is graded on his "performance" then the results are even more effective.

When a limited number of students are writing at the board, then those in their seats can be asked to make corrections before the teacher offers them. Often students can be assigned in pairs, one as writer at the board, one as corrector at his seat. This stimulates competition and it does arrest the development of progressive passivity on the part of the student left in his or her seat.

Dictation, pure and simple, can be one of the most stultifying activities of classroom teaching. One of the most passive of pastimes. It can be also converted into an active process, however. First, the teacher must select an interesting passage for the dictation. Then sound out the class orally on the thought content of the passage even before it is dictated. The teacher asks questions with respect to the new ideas in the passage. The students guess possible answers. The teacher may ask for English translations of selected sentences that appear in the dictation. He may read parts of the passages taken out of context and ask the student to give an interpretation of them in the foreign language. He may ask for the explanation of the meaning of some of the rather difficult words in the passage. All this is by way of "preview." When the dictation has been given, much can be done by way of "review." It is possible now to compare the ideas of the text with the ideas previously held by the students. Later, having seen his students' papers, the teacher can classify the mistakes in writing most common to all and analyze them for all. In such ways, the dictation ceases to be mere making of a transcription by student-stenographer, and it becomes an active classroom procedure.

In pronunciation work, the teacher will notice that rarely does one student profit by the mistakes and corrections of another. To the extent that it is not an unusual experience for a teacher to be obliged to correct the same (and a very common one) mistake made several times in an unbroken sequence by different students. Students can and should be trained by their teachers to profit from the trials and errors of one another. In oral work, after several students have pronounced French, others who have not recited can be called upon to make corrections on definite mispronunciations. It is also possible for the teacher to repeat the mistakes in pronunciation and ask students who remained silent to give the correct sounds. Students should also be taught to give the reasons for correcting pronunciations, to spell similar sound forms in other words. They can also be required to be constantly listing the corrections that a teacher gives to individual pupils. After a time the lists are collected, the most commonly recurrent mistakes are codified. They are then redistributed among the students and re-read to see if each one has or has not the common oral defects of his hypothetical neighbor. Some general participations of this type must be employed. For when pronunciation work is carried on simply between teacher and individual student, those not reciting tend to lapse into non-hearers. If the entire group is taught to be responsive to each individual, then the attention of each and every one becomes more alert—and the results become more encouraging for the teacher.

Another of the most passive of performances creeping in (like a paralysis) to our teaching techniques is that of "aural comprehension." The student is asked either to listen to discs, to the teacher reading aloud, or to sit

silently and take in a film. He is then objectively tested and his results are mechanically scored. And we claim that he is being educated. As a matter of fact, if education (even in language learning) is not give and take, "va et vient perpétuel," reception and communication, then it is little or nothing. And much can be done to keep "aural comprehension" from merely developing receptive moods and to make it a stimulating, active enterprise.

Let us take just the example of the film. Give us the script first. Let students and teacher work on it orally: pronunciation, timbre, vocal register, rhythm, accent, intonation, gesture, visual expression, etc. Then, discuss the ideas in it. Perhaps speculate beforehand on the actor's possible interpretation. Then give us selections from the sound tract. Let us hear them. Change our own oral representation, by imitation of the voices on the records. Then let us see the film. We shall discuss, after the showing of the production, the enhanced effect that visual representation gives to mere vocal registration. We shall analyze ideas and situations that have been screened. We may even try, script in hand, to now reenact them in our classroom, while each "non-acting" student remains an active critic-director on the sidelines (that have become front lines). Of course, the very avant garde "educationalists" would go even further and say: "Don't stop here, go ahead, out of an activity make a project, now make your own film." We, here, do not go that far, for we consider it a dissipation of misdirected energy. We are interested, educationally, not in "taking the tangent," but in "centering on the core," in transferring passive undertaking into essential active enterprise.

The examples could be multiplied. Perhaps the idea is clear already without there being further necessity for doing so. The point is pressing, though. Whatever we do, we must do something in our language classrooms, to keep those not participating from lapsing languorously into the arms of morpheic somnolence, passive ease and corrosive inactivity. We must keep the students from backsliding. But, what is far more serious, we teachers ourselves must ward off our own indulgence in forms of professional and pedagogical indolence. In the education of large numbers, we must guard against mass teaching techniques that, if inadvisedly used or resignedly adopted, might result in mass stultification. If we must resort to aural comprehension, to choral reading, to listening devices of screen and disc, to group dictations and the like, then we must do our best, at all times, to make them an active enterprise in which the individual is kept alert, attentive, responsive, and is not submerged apathetically, submissively in the group.

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## *Mispronunciations in 19th Century French Literature*

IT will come as no surprise to say that French proper names have often foiled those who have tried to speak them according to the established rules. The 19th Century in particular has produced an odd assortment of names with sounds that do not correspond to the written language. My concern over the matter became acute through students of mine, born and schooled in France, who persist in pronouncing French authors according to the "logic" of conventional spelling.

It is natural to suspect words of non-Gallic origin as the ones most likely to lead students into error. Stendhal, for example, and Mendès and Benjamin Constant become stēdal, mēdes, bēzamē kōstā since the nasal "en" is usually sounded: ē in proper names of foreign provenance. Flemish names such as Maeterlinck and Verhaeren are rendered materlink and veraren with the "ae" preserving its original sound. As the two preceding examples indicate, French nasal vowels are not brought into play for any names of Flemish origin: e.g. Rodenback rōdenbak.

Other figures of the same period with names frequently mispronounced: Auber obē:r; Aurevilly ɔrviji; Barrès bares; Berlioz bērljɔ:z; Bouilhet buje; Cuvillier-Fleury kyviljeflœry; Delescluze deleklɥ:z; Dierx djer; Dreyfus drefys; Fabre fa:br; Heredia, José-Maria de eredja (zoze marja dā); Huysmans, Joris-Karl ɥismā:s (ʒɔriskarl); Jammes, Francis zam (frāsis); Lesseps lēseps; Leconte de Lisle ləkōt dā lil; Meilhac mejak; Mérimée, Prosper merime (prɔspe:r); Merrill, Stuart meril (stɥar); Millet mile; Moréas mōrea:s; Offenbach ɔfēbak; Saint-Pol-Roux sēpolrɥ; Saint-Saëns sēsā:s; Sand sā:d;<sup>1</sup> Staël stal;<sup>2</sup> Sully-Prudhomme syliprydɔm; Talleyrand talerā;<sup>3</sup> Thiers tjē:r; Vielé-Griffin, Francis vjelegrifē (frāsis); Villiers de l'Isle-Adam vilje dā liladā; Vogüé, Eugène-Melchior de vɔgɥe (øʒenmelkɥɔr dā).

And in 19th Century French Literature appear places and titles that present certain difficulties. Daudet's *Dernière Classe* takes place in alzas (not alsas as is frequently heard). Alfred de Vigny wrote *Chatterton* ʃatertɔ̃

<sup>1</sup> sā has become admissible although the author always pronounced her name: sā:d.

<sup>2</sup> —according to the *Nouveau petit Larousse illustré*. However, Cousins, C. E. & Ward, C. F., *Student's Handbook of French Pronunciation*, p. 58, give stal has the preferred form.

<sup>3</sup> Curiously, Martinon, Ph., *Comment on prononce le français*, p. 86, asserts this name should be tal:rā

and *Cinq-Mars* sēma:r. Lamartine met Mme Charles at Aix-les-Bains eslebē. Shortly after Chateaubriand met Washington in pēsilvani,<sup>4</sup> he began writing *Les Natchez* natʃez.<sup>5</sup> In spite of the frequent French spelling: Edgar Poë, the name remains po.<sup>6</sup> The "ch" sound in Francisque Michel miʃel is sometimes confused with the one in Michel-Ange mikelā:ʒ. Flaubert wrote *Salammô* salāmbô. And Ernest (ernest) Renan embellished the legend of *Tristan et Yseult* isø; in *La vie de Jésus* he described Jérusalem ʒeryzalem. Jules Laforgue was born in Uruguay yrygwe<sup>7</sup> and Daniel-François Auber in Caen kâ. *Le lion de l'Atlas* atla:s is found in the works of both Th. Gautier and Alphonse Daudet. Alfred de Musset's *Légende de Don Juan* ends of course d5ʒqâ. During the Second Empire sæg5tâpi:r Maximilian (Maximilien) maksimiljē ruled in the suburbs of Mexico City meksiko. Leconte de Lisle made vivid descriptions of the Jungle la ʒ5:gl. The islands of Jersey and Guernsey, where Victor Hugo lived in exile, have been Gallicized into ʒerʒe and ʒernøʒe. Hugo used to receive members of the *second cénacle* at his home in Paris, *Place des Vosges* vo:ʒ. *Ruy Blas* is sounded rui bla:s with the "s" pronounced. And the "d" figures in the phonetics of *Les djinns* dʒin. Bayard baja:r, *le chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*, crops up now and again in 19th Century French Literature as in the dreams of Emma Bovary.

The terms submitted here are obviously far from complete. However, they call attention to the need of a gazetteer and biographical dictionary rendering *all* significant proper names into the international phonetic alphabet. To my knowledge no comprehensive study has yet appeared.

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Santa Barbara College

<sup>4</sup> Mansion, J. E., *Heath's Standard French and English Dictionary*, gives pāsīlvani as the preferred form. Both are correct, however.

<sup>5</sup> Martinon, *op. cit.*, p. 350, states, incorrectly, that natʃe is the way to pronounce this proper name.

<sup>6</sup> poe is the form indicated in: Nitze, William A. & Wilkins, Ernest H., *A Handbook of French Phonetics*, p. 58. This phonetic spelling has never been accepted.

<sup>7</sup> Martinon, *op. cit.*, p. 244, states that yryge is more prevalent.



## The "Interpenetration" of Literatures

IN 1948, I received from France *L'Almanach des Lettres*, 1947, which gave a summary of the literary year in France. Like all almanachs it was full of information. It contained, in particular, a section on translations, and gave a small dictionary of foreign writers which it commented in the following way: "It would have been impossible to list all contemporary writers; we have therefore listed only those foreign writers whose works were translated since the liberation, or those which present events have brought to the fore."

"Only" those writers, however, add up to around seventy names, and the writers listed are: American, Argentinian, Canadian, Chilean, Danish, English, German, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Russian and Spanish. It is interesting to note *en passant* that the United States' writers head the list with twenty-one names, followed by fifteen English writers and eleven Russian writers. This shows how rapidly today the literary scene reflects the national curiosities and preoccupations of the moment.

Many of the works listed, though not all, had been translated almost immediately after their publication in their own country, with the most extraordinary rapidity. We might explain this phenomenon by the sudden enthusiasm and hunger for communication with the outside world which followed the liberation of occupied countries. However, in another section, the Almanach also informed me that, before the War, France alone exported, on an average, twenty-four million books a year. What the liberation did, therefore, was merely to accentuate a movement which is peculiar to our time and which can, I think, only continue. I do not think there will be any slowing down of the process. The massive and instantaneous diffusion of innumerable literary works coming from all parts of the world is here to stay. One might say, of course, that literature is merely catching up here with music and painting which, unhampered by language barriers have reached the same rapid diffusion. Certainly, but the diffusion of literary works seems more haphazard, and much more widespread; music and painting are, on the whole, reserved to a much smaller group, an elite.

My title itself, *the interpenetration of literatures*, came straight out of one of the small, little-known literary magazines of post-war France, *L'Age Nouveau*. This magazine carries a section called "l'Entrepénétration des littératures"; a most ambitious section for it ranges with remarkable ease and authority from the theatre in Russia to the lyrical poetry in Indo

Paper read at the luncheon meeting of the Modern Language Association of Philadelphia and vicinity, April 30th, 1949.

China, making a halt in Arabia, Scandinavia, Canada, Switzerland, the United States or Hungary on the way. The title of the magazine is of interest in itself, for obviously *L'Age Nouveau* clearly indicates that it is interested in today or tomorrow, but not in yesterday; it is dissociating itself from the past. If we turn to other, and better-known reviews like *Les Temps Modernes*, the existentialist review, we observe the same trend: ubiquity in content, the contributions coming from all over the world, and a definite position of detachment toward the past, the past being considered as dead. What strikes me, however, as I read the content of the section called "the Interpenetration of literatures" is the avid and conscious search far afield, but in the contemporary field, for materials which in no sense could be defined as interpenetrating. The desire for a kind of universal conversation through the medium of literature, coming from all parts of the globe, has, in fact, preceded the existence of this conversation. *L'Age Nouveau* calls interpenetration what is really a haphazard search for any foreign works available, which it then juxtaposes with considerable enthusiasm but with very little reason.

You can see that I am not here concerned with what T. S. Eliot in his *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* calls the "circulation of influence, thought and sensibility between nation and nation," throughout centuries of slow communication. I am not going to deal with the infinitely intricate currents of interchange and influence which have characterized intellectual life and artistic production as we have known them for so many centuries, particularly in our occidental world.

What I am concerned with is a double phenomenon of a different order: the impact on all our literatures of a massive and chaotic bombardment of works of all kinds, accessible to an ever-wider reading-public which is avid to know them; and its coincidence with the disappearance, at least partial, of a European "bourgeois" tradition of culture in the humanities which most writers admit has taken place, and which is clearly manifest in the voluntary rejection of the long-tested and well-established values of past literatures. These trends are present in America today, though for many reasons, not as strongly marked as in Europe.

The first impression one has, when confronted by this picture, is that of chaos. It is obvious, as one glances down the list of works translated into French between 1945 and 1947, that in no sense do they give a complete or even adequate picture of the literary scene in any country, much less of the country itself; their literary value too is often questionable. That James Cain, Henry Miller, Marcia Davenport and Wallace Stephen are considered in France, and somewhat on the same level, as distinguished writers may come as a surprise to many Americans, who on the whole are more familiar with *The Plague* by Albert Camus, than with *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, translated into French as "*La Montagne de mes rêves*."

This impression of chaos simply transfers to the literary scene something of the incoherent atmosphere in which we live. We are in literature as well as in our everyday lives, uprooted from a world where, in Europe at least, the changes have been so great that it is difficult to remember the past or imagine the future. We do not know how to find our way in it, and are left in a state of bewilderment, torn, as Paul Valéry remarked, "between a feeling of futility and anxiety," as we leaf over the editors' catalogues, trying to make some choice in them. Whatever the country to which we turn, we who are interested in its literature, find ourselves overwhelmed by the same confusion and complexity in its literary scene; it is perhaps more accentuated merely in France which served as a refuge for many a writer and where editing is still a vocation rather than a business. We therefore feel, today, a great deal of hesitation in establishing values, distinguishing good from bad, indicating lines of development. We prefer to call directions, "new" directions, though the critic is brave who will define which way these are directed. We have the impression of a complete fragmentation of the literary scene.

Perhaps the contemporary scene always does leave such an impression, to a certain extent, but not, I think, to the extent which we see today.

Moreover we as teachers and scholars have added to the general confusion. Never at any time have so many works of the past, interesting and uninteresting, been translated, re-edited, re-habilitated, explained, made available to the public. The vast scholarly effort which really only got under way with the beginning of our century has borne its fruits, considerably upsetting the traditional picture we had, in France for example, of our literary heritage. That, in a way, is good; but it makes it more difficult for us to transmit to others the clear picture of the past which our predecessors seemed to be able, more easily, to draw. Besides, our work has often taken the form of another sort of fragmentation. We take a poem, a novel or a play, and when we have finished with the sources, the reminiscences, the parallels, the historical background, what we give back to our students is a kind of patchwork, and we ourselves may have lost the sense of its unity, hence of its value. So that each work which comes to us from the past tends to assume within itself the same aspect as the modern literary scene, which rejects it. With all due respect to my magazine, *l'Age Nouveau*, what we see all around us is not an interpenetration of literatures but a juxtaposition of incoherent elements which refuse to settle down into any kind of a pattern.

No wonder, therefore, that turning their backs on the past our young writers seek their "new directions" in the contemporary scene and far afield. For our literary heritage has come to seem more and more overwhelming in its mass, burdensome and without significance. We have tended to lose the sense of delight and newness all good literature gives.

This, I would say, is one aspect of the crisis in the humanities, one of the elements which explain the literary scene. The avidness for the immediately

contemporary and new is linked to the *dehumanization*, if I may borrow Ortega y Gasset's word, of academic research and literary criticism. Now we, as teachers of modern languages, are *not* responsible for all the ills of the world nor are we able to redress them all; and certainly we are not responsible for the incoherence of the present literary scene which is so profoundly linked to the state of the whole social organism. But, obviously, we are involved in the problems raised, for it is up to us to furnish in our teaching those elements of living interest and newness which are being sought after in the literary whirlpool.

One of the reactions we might have as we are confronted by such masses of foreign literature, undigested both in quality and quantity, is obvious and simple. Rather than carry the weight and conflict of so many cross currents of influence, we can reject them in an attempt to establish coherence in our culture. Some groups have attempted, or are attempting, through a careful plan of "national" development, to establish a unilateral development, coherent and unified for the group. But we know only too well that literary and aesthetic exclusivism, like any other exclusivism, brings about subsequent stagnation. It did just that in Europe in the 1930's, as T. S. Eliot remarks in his *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, and that, not only in Germany, but also in the countries on the other side of the curtain, England and France. Nothing is worse, internationally, than intellectual protectionism. It could be tried, but it would be almost impossible to impose; for a look at the figures I have stated shows the force of expansion literature has in today's international scene.

We could of course ignore it, but this international interchange in literature, chaotic, disintegrating and confusing though it be, is potentially one of the greatest forces abroad today. It will only leave us behind. Perhaps it has already.

We have just come out of a war which naturally breeds in all participants a certain form of nationalism. During a war we are, of course, necessarily conscious of the existence of other groups, but only through our national point of view, and we momentarily lose that part of intellectual freedom which allows us to communicate freely in the world of literature and the arts or in the realm of ideas, unhampered by any national bias, on a non-national basis. We have, in war, a heightened consciousness of international problems, but all our intellectual activity tends to take the form of direct or indirect propaganda; we wish to impose on what is foreign *our* views and judgments, we do not just freely exchange them with others. We therefore lose the sense of simple communication, for sheer pleasure, and interest, and without any thought of some subsequent strategic need. Nothing better than literature, than the delight it gives, and the perpetual curiosity it raises, can re-establish our habit of freedom.

That is why perhaps the materials have so fast accumulated, and the

avidity to know them has been so strong. It seems to me that it is our job to see that out of the chaos comes not a fragmentary juxtaposition, but a real interpenetration of literatures; and we must get back something which we have lended to lose, the sense of the present value of all great literature, however far away in time it may be. For we can put into the hands of our students, in the languages available to them, precisely what they are trying to find, points of view outside their own boundaries of thought, more universal and yet contemporary. It is the only way we can escape, and help them escape, from the feeling of futility and insignificance which the present, unrelated to the past and therefore to the future, can only give us, in literature as in any other domain.

The teaching of language and literature in the United States has been active in this direction, unhampered by national prejudices; but it could take a far greater consciousness of its rôle, and fill its place with more authority, specially in a world where a concern with politics tends to dominate the intellectual scene.

"A universal concern with politics" says T. S. Eliot, "does not unite, it divides"; in fact it is often at the root of what he calls "the closing of the mental frontiers." I would venture to add that a universal concern with literature as such, more than any other activity perhaps, informs and unites.

It is a disinterested activity carried on for our own pleasure, according to our own curiosity. But it gives a knowledge which no amount of "information" can approach. It is a fact that the constant preoccupation with the immediate relevancy and usefulness of information really threatens our acquisition of pertinent knowledge on the international level. Obviously, there is abroad today, as the literary scene clearly shows, a chaotic search for just the sort of knowledge that literature gives. It seems to me that what the trends I have rapidly examined show is a fundamental and vigorous search for a re-introduction to the world of the humanities, which, after all, is ours.

GERMAINE BRÉE

*Bryn Mawr College*

# *American Doctoral Degrees Granted in the Field of Modern Languages in 1949*

## *Bryn Mawr College*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Barbara Mary St. George Craig	French	L'Estoyre de Griseldis; a Critical Edition	May 31, 1949

## *The Catholic University of America*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Sister Marguerite Felicie Inial	French	Henri Davignon, Ecrivain Belge.	June, 1949
Leroy Henry Woodson	German	American Negro Slavery in the Works of Friedrich Strubberg, Friedrich Gerstaecker and Otto Rupp	June, 1949

## *University of Chicago*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Robert H. Cardew	French	Les Jugements littéraires de Gustave Flaubert d'après sa correspondance	Mar., 1949
Barbara M. García	Spanish	An annotated edition of Cristóbal Lozano's <i>Soledades de la vida y desengaños del mundo</i> (1658)	Mar., 1949
Nils W. Olsson	Scandinavian	Vilmundar Saga Victutan	Mar., 1949

## *University of Cincinnati*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
John Sinnema	German	A Critical Study of the Dutch Translation of Sebastian Brant's <i>Narrenschiff</i>	June, 1949
Frank A. Preuninger	German	Goethe's Faust in English Translation since 1924—A Critical Study	June, 1949



*Columbia University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Max Berenblut	French	A Comparative Study of Judaeo-Italian Translations of Isaiah	June, 1949
John P. Bowden	Italian	An Analysis of Pietro Alighieri's Commentary on the Divine Comedy	June, 1949
Newell R. Bush	French	The Marquis d'Argens and His Philosophical Correspondence	June, 1949
Daisy C. Fornacca	Italian	Hegel and the Hegelians in the Literary Criticism of Italian Literature	June, 1949
John R. Loy	French	The Reluctant Fatalist: a Critical Appreciation of Diderot's <i>Jaques le Fataliste</i>	June, 1949
Ferdinando D. Maurino	Italian	Salvatore Di Giacomo and Neapolitan Dialect Literature	Feb., 1949
Siegfried H. Muller	German	Gerhart Hauptmann and Goethe	June, 1949
Edith May Scottron	French	The Nature of the Latin Passive Verb and Its Replacement in the Romance Languages	Mar., 1949
Abram Taffel	French	The Prose Fiction and Dramatic Works of Henri Duvernois	May, 1949

*Cornell University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Joseph Congress	French	Gustave Flaubert and the French Critics 1857-1906	June, 1949
William John Grupp	Spanish	Dramatic Theory and Criticism in Spain During the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries	June, 1949

*Harvard University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Philip Allison Turner	Romance Languages	Some Aspects of the Ideology of Pero Mexia	Mar., 1949
Marcy Summers Powell	Romance Languages	Epicureanism in French Literature, 1680-1715	June, 1949
Benjamin Mather Woodbridge, Jr.	Romance Languages	Pessimism in the Writings of Machado de Assis: a study in the Development of an Attitude and its Expression	June, 1949

## WILLIAM MARION MILLER

*University of Kentucky*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Laura Jean McAdams	French	H. Taine, <i>The Neurotic</i>	Aug., 1949

*Laval University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Paul Marie Barranger	French	La chançon de Willame (XI siecle)	1949
A. D. Bellegarde	French	Evariste-Désiré Parny, poète et philanthrope	1949
Rev. Sr. Marie Clémente	French	L'apostolat littéraire d'Henri Ghéon	1949
Edward Corbett	French	Les contes du terroir depuis 1900	1949
Rev. Sr. Marie Magdalen, O.P.	French	Charles DuBos, écrivain européen et critique des littératures étrangères	1949
Rev. Fr. Victor Milot	French	Le Richelieu, route militaire de la Nouvelle-France	1949

*University of Michigan*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Clarence Boersma	German	The Educational Ideal of the Major Works of Herman Hesse	Feb., 1949
Yakira Hagalili Frank	Linguistics	The Speech of New York City	Feb., 1949
Loyal Ansel T. Gryting	French	The Oldest Version of the Twelfth Century "Venjance Nostre Seigneur"	June, 1949
Robert G. Mead, Jr.	Spanish	Manuel González Prada, prosista	June, 1949

*University of Minnesota*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Herman Ernst Rothfuss	German	The German Theater in Minnesota	Mar., 1949
Rudolf Karl Bernard	German	Der Vater-Sohn-Konflikt in Modernen Deutschen Drama (1900-1920)	June, 1949
Guy François Desgranges	French	Montaigne et la Politique	June, 1949

*New York University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Hélène F. Farrère	French	Le Théâtre du Peuple à Paris entre 1895 et 1914	June, 1949
Sarina Bono Hallonquist	Spanish	Diego de Torres Villarroel, Spanish Eighteenth Century Universal Satirist	Feb., 1949

*Ohio State University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Robert Herman Esser	German	Otto Ludwig's Dramatic Theories	Mar., 1949
Mary Jo Fink Herz	French	French Costume as Portrayed by Eustache Deschamps	June, 1949
Henry Kratz, Jr.	German	Ueber den Worschatz der Erotik im Spätmittelhochdeutschen und Frühneuhochdeutschen	June, 1949
Humphrey Newton Milnes	German	Ueber die Erotische Sprache in der Mittelhochdeutschen höfischen Dichtung	June, 1949

*University of North Carolina*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Rosalyn Howard Gardner	French	Studies in Fourteenth Century French Syntax	June, 1949
Marion Austin Greene	French	Studies in Fifteenth Century French Syntax	June, 1949
Alpheus Sheffield Hodge	French	A Critical Edition of <i>Hue Capet</i> , with Introduction, Notes, and Glossary	June, 1949
Robert Guilford Lewis	French	Preliminary Studies in the Perceforest	June, 1949
Stanley Linn Robe	Spanish	A Dialect and Folkloristic Study of Texts Recorded in Los Altos of Jalisco, Mexico	June, 1949
Elbert Daymond Turner	Spanish	The Vocabulary of Bernal Diaz del Castillo's <i>Historia Verdadera de La Nueva Espana</i>	June, 1949
Albert Lake Lancaster	German	The Language of Jörg Wickram's <i>Galmy</i> and a Comparison of it with that of <i>Der Jungen Knaben Spiegel</i>	June, 1949

*Northwestern University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Walter F. C. Ade	German	Eine Sprichwortersammlung aus den Werken des Andreas Gryphius	June, 1949
Hubert E. Mate	Romance Languages	Alfredo d'Escragnolle Taunay-Writer, Soldier, and Political Figure of the Brazilian Empire	June, 1949
Paul D. Waldorf	Romance Languages	The Contemporary Mexican Short Story	June, 1949
Archer Woodford	Romance Languages	An Edition of the Works of Juan de Cueto y Mena with an Introduction and Notes	June, 1949

*University of Pittsburgh*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Sister Maria Thecla Hisrich	Spanish	José María Gabriel y Galán, Spanish Folk Poet	June, 1949
Benjamin Warren Haseltine	French	Louis Verneuil, Playwright, 1910-1940, an Evaluation	Sept., 1949

*Stanford University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Mary Alberta Williams	Germanic Language	The Intellectual Vocabulary of German as a Loan-Field	June, 1949

*University of Texas*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Nettie Lee Benson	Spanish	The Provincial Deputation in Mexico: Precursor of the Mexican Federal State	June, 1949
Alfredo Berumen	Spanish	The Satirical Art of Quevedo	June, 1949
Edmund Ludwig King	French	Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer: From Painter to Poet	June, 1949
Carmine Rocco Linsalata	Spanish	Tobias Smollett and Charles Jarvis: Translators of <i>Don Quixote</i>	June, 1949
James Manfred Manfredini	Spanish	The Political Role of the Count of Revillagigedo, Viceroy of New Spain, 1789-1794	June, 1949
Robert Lamar Pendley	French	The Thoughts and Writings of Rousseau Prior to His <i>Discours sur les sciences et les arts</i>	June, 1949

Reginald Carl Reindorp	Spanish French Literature	Romanticism in the Drama of José Echegaray	June, 1949
Henry DeQuincey Siler	French Spanish	<i>La Critique Musicale de Jean Christophe</i>	June, 1949
Ralph Eugene White	Spanish	<i>La Comedia de Figurón</i> of Rojas Zorrilla and Moreto	June, 1949
John Dowell Williams	Spanish French	<i>Viage y naufragios del Macdonio</i> de Juan Baptista de Loyola: A Critical Edition	June, 1949
Mrs. Sarah Soto Zajicek	Spanish	Language Teaching with Special Reference to Methods and Materials for Spanish in the Junior High School	June, 1949

*Washington University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Frank Dominic Horvay	German	Grillparzer as a Critic of German Literature	Jan., 1949

*University of Wisconsin*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Robert Brown Johnson	French	A Reexamination and Revaluation of the Dual Nature in the Life and Work of Pierre Loti	Jan., 1949
Edith Lida Kirchberger	German	The Role of the Woman as Mother in the German Epic of the Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries	June, 1949
Harry Wilbur Osborne	French	A Critical Analysis of "Les Thibault" by Roger Martin Du Gard	June, 1949

*Yale University*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Major Field</i>	<i>Title of Thesis</i>	<i>Date of Receiving Degree</i>
Paul James Kann	French	The Critical Ideas of Honoré de Balzac	Jan., 1949
Robert Livingston Beare	German	Vision and Exploration	June, 1949
Bianca Marie Calabresi	French	<i>Les Maitres de la jeunesse laïque</i> de Renan	June, 1949
Robert Greer Cohn	French	The Masterpiece of Mallarmé	June, 1949
Kenneth Dreyer	French	The Thought and Literary Art of Philippe de Commynes	June, 1949
Ian Craig Loram	German	Goethe and the Publication of His Works	June, 1949
Irving Putter	French	The Pessimism of Leconte de Lisle	June, 1949

Compiled by WILLIAM MARION MILLER

# *Language Occupations*

## THE TRAVEL CAREERIST

WE all know of the tremendous increase in travel by Americans and are more or less aware that the conduct of many of our fellow citizens abroad leaves much to be desired. Just how acute the problem had already become by shortly after the war was made startlingly clear by the categorical statement of Major Oliver LaFarge, who as historical officer for the Air Transport Command told a group of educators and industrialists met in Denver to discuss the problems of air age education that great increase in global travel by Americans "might sabotage every effort to bring peace and mutual understanding to the world. . . . It is evident that only a complete change in our viewpoint, a genuine effort to appreciate the cultures of other nations can make air travel pleasant and profitable for Americans. Each flight will bring people of the world closer together. With mutual understanding, this new way of life can guarantee permanent peace. With mutual dislike, this non-military air age can do more damage than all the bombers of this war."

What can counselors say to students who have become aware through travel, reading, lecture, or hearsay of this situation and are at the point of considering career possibilities that offer some opportunity for improving it? It seems apparent that language teachers have a particular responsibility in that they realize that the "empathy" about which social scientists talk is one of the objectives of the study of the literature and backgrounds of a people in the process of learning their language. In fact, we might even inquire how far "the projection of one's self into the imagined consciousness of another person" is possible without knowing at least something of the nuances, so easily lost in translation, of that person's native tongue! Although the number of languages which any one person can learn is of course limited, his having once gained a realization of the factors involved in seeing the point of view of even one group of different linguistic heritage should certainly make him more understanding in his dealings with all those of backgrounds different from his own.

One of the air age vocations in which the language student may hope to find a place as socially constructive as he knows how or can find ways to make it, and which offers other inducements as well, is that of the travel agency assistant or manager.

The skeptic may raise an eyebrow at the suggestion that travel agencies and transportation companies are concerned about international goodwill



as affected by the conduct of travelers and ask "What do they care, so long as they sell tickets?" Precisely. Discounting for our purpose the presence of socially minded individuals among the executives of these companies, consider the particular angle of international relations which concerns them financially. If Americans should make themselves so obnoxious abroad that they cause their countrymen to be unpopular and, because of their reception, they become less eager to travel, who would suffer first?

Why do you suppose that Pan American Airway's Educational Division has reprinted and made available upon request the article "How to Win Friends and Influence People in Latin America"? If only slightly modified, it might well be entitled "Ten Commandments for Travelers Anywhere."

How many of our students, or even of us adults, actually realize that when we cross an international boundary we are thereby participating in international commerce and to some extent—depending on where beyond the line we go and what we do there—in international relations? Have you seen, or better, have you in your files, a copy of the article from *Travel* for May, 1949 (condensed in the *Reader's Digest* for the following June) entitled "How to Be an American Abroad?" Why do you suppose our State Department publishes the booklet cited therein called "Information for bearers of Passports?" What could be more to the point than the words of this quotation: "Make it a point to know something about the country you're visiting. Learn something of the language; 200 words are better than none. Knowing a little in advance gives you a chance to ask intelligent questions and thus learn a lot more. And your enlightened interest will arouse respect for Americans. . . ."

If we are to consider then the occupation of the travel careerist and some possible means of entering it, we may well use as a point of departure a timely article on "Careers in Travel" in the March, 1949, number of *School and College Placement*. The major reservation we should perhaps make about generalizing on the basis of information from this well known agency is its expressed preference for women as branch managers. But such preferences are so few in the business world that surely no one will grudge us such a rare advantage! Moreover, it is mentioned specifically that this is not necessarily typical of other agencies but is a logical result of the findings by the Mr. Foster who founded the company, "who declared that women had more patience and greater capacities for painstaking detail."

One reason for choosing this article for our purpose is the stress it lays on a fact we need to indicate to students—that it is only the intelligent traveler who either contributes to improving international relations or who can, from that "practical business standpoint" if you like, hope to capitalize on it in this field. To those who think that simply because they have traveled a great deal they are naturals for the business, Miss Russel says: "Clearly we do not minimize the value of travel background, yet the only type of

traveler who is successful in selling travel is one who has a lively interest in places and people, keen powers of observation, and the genius to translate her experiences into appealing terms understandable to all types of travelers."

A second reason for beginning this series with the travel careerist is that it is one of the few fields which seeks trainees with a liberal arts background, including the ability to converse in a foreign tongue, "French, German, Spanish, or Portuguese, for instance."

In the course of this four page article, Miss Russel explains the functions of a travel advisor, spelling out the details involved in serving the traveler by "giving reliable and authoritative advice on all aspects of travel," states and elaborates upon the five essential requirements found most desirable for women training as travel careerists with the Service, describes the eight months' training program, and concludes with a paragraph on chances for advancement.

In outline form the qualifications listed are these:

1. Age, between 25 and 35.
2. College education or equivalent and some travel background. Besides the knowledge of language, which is considered "valuable," an excellent knowledge of geography is "requisite"; a practical knowledge of typing is "useful."

It is here that the author makes a considerable point of the fact that only that travel is useful which provides insight. She adds that sales and executive ability are essential, as are also talent for intricate detail and the ability to work with others harmoniously.

3. Have a capacity for meeting all kinds of people without any feeling of superiority or inferiority.
4. Have good health and enthusiasm for work.
5. Possess the ability to handle complicated details, have executive possibilities, including self-confidence, and a faculty for salesmanship. "Sales ability is reckoned a number one qualification."

The training program extends over about eight months, after which the young woman becomes a trainee-assistant to the branch manager. As she acquires experience and confidence she becomes qualified as a junior manager and eventually a senior manager in charge of a branch office. For those who make good in this highly competitive field, the rewards are a pleasant profession and financial compensation "in keeping with other endeavors."

Among the advantages of this field is the fact that travel agencies are widely distributed throughout the country, although obviously the positions in which there will be greatest need and opportunity for the use of foreign languages are those centers which are most attractive to foreign visitors. But again the nationwide extent of the major travel bureau services offers opportunity for transfer from one section to another.

One of the questions our new graduates will surely ask is "But what do I do until I am twenty-five?" To them the three to five year interval will look in prospect like an eternity, but they may be glad to see that the time provides an opportunity to try out some of the other fields which they may have been loath to consider because they seem to them not to lead anywhere.

Counselors tend to think first of the clerical route, and of course the possibility should not be overlooked. The filing clerk and the typist have an opportunity to get behind the scenes in all kinds of businesses and to appraise work being done there in terms of their own interests and potentialities. Add the ability to translate to a foreign language and that of taking dictation in one or more languages, and the opportunities for work which is in itself interesting multiply. How often do we complain that there are not jobs for our language graduates while the would-be employers lament the lack of what is for them adequately trained personnel? As an appropriate example, here is a quotation from a letter written by the Manager (a man, in this case) of the Latin American Department of a west coast travel agency some two years ago:

"The past few days I have been interviewing applicants for an immediate opening we have for a Spanish translator-stenographer . . . I need someone who can take my letters by shorthand in English, translate them into good business Spanish and type them. It is really discouraging. I know good business Spanish and can write. But so far, I have been unable to find a person who knows idiomatic Spanish. I am still hoping to find such a person. From experience I find that most of the graduate students here at the University are interested only in translating from Spanish to English, not the reverse."

However, in the other case we were considering, Miss Russel was, shall we say, blissfully silent concerning clerical skills other than typing. Instead, she stressed sales ability as the most essential qualification, closely followed by that of being able to meet all sorts of people easily.

It is obvious that selling experience would be a valuable asset. A factor to keep in mind here is that the salesperson who can speak a foreign language with customers does well to make that known to her employers and fellow-workers. She may find more opportunity than she anticipated to put her ability to use.

A third route, and one less likely to occur to college graduates, once they have their diplomas, is that of the waiter or waitress. Certainly they have the requisite opportunity to come in contact with all sorts of people. In many cases where the graduate feels the need for technical training or intensive language study in addition to his or her general education the possibility of securing it may be opened up by the part time employment that waiting on tables for a short time each day can provide.

An article giving some useful information in this connection, available as a reprint from *Glamour*, is entitled "Waitresses Make Money." One para-

graph reads: "If you shop judiciously, you can sometimes even choose your audience. Maybe you'd like a foreign restaurant because you know the language and enjoy exchanging an occasional word with the customers in their native tongue."

Another good experience in preparation for travel bureau work would be that of airplane hostess (or steward). Not many weeks ago the New York papers carried this advertisement: "Airline Stewardess Trainees, College, 21-26 years, 5' 2" to 5' 6" to 130 pounds; languages; attractive." Requirements for different lines vary somewhat, but these are reasonably typical.

As a socially constructive way of securing the highly desirable background of the traveler who has cultivated the seeing eye, the hearing ear, and the understanding heart, students still in college might well give serious consideration to some such project as the Experiment in International Living, about which information is available from the Manager, Donald Watt, at Putney, Vermont. For those who can qualify after having been an Experimenter, the opportunity of heading up a subsequent group could be an invaluable experience. For some, a summer or a longer period with the American Friends Service Committee, whose headquarters are at 20 South Twelfth Street in Philadelphia, could provide a great deal of insight, prove one's ability to work closely with a variety of people, improve language ability, and possibly open new vistas.

Another possibility for the travel careerist rather than managing a branch is that of becoming an assistant in a small agency. Such a person might at times serve as tour conductor. A quotation from a letter written some months ago by the President of the Pan-Pacific Good Neighbor Tours, operating from Seattle to Alaska, Asia, and Latin America illustrates this. He wrote: "Pan-Pacific expects to have an opening on its staff for a person capable of specializing in the field of travel in Latin America. Our type of tours is new to American tourism, and for this reason, we would prefer to train the right type of person for this position. A good knowledge of the Spanish language, a familiarity with the heritage and culture of Latin America, plus a personality capable of serving as a host or hostess will be basic requirements. The ability to type and take dictation, while not essential, would be a point that would be considered."

All in all, the travel agency career is one with which we would do well to see that our language students are acquainted early. They may then be able to avail themselves of "area offerings" in institutions where courses in the history and geography of a given region are available, and perhaps to plan their summers' experiences in ways which will in themselves be useful, enjoyable, and have a long term value.

IRENE ZIMMERMAN

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## Notes and News

### *Of Things Lusitanian in New England*

I recently made a *peregrinação* to the great Portuguese city of New Bedford, Massachusetts, and would like to recommend it to anyone interested in studying the *idioma lusitano* in this country, and who does not have the immediate means of going to Brazil to Portugal.

In one short week-end I was able to find myself in an authentic atmosphere, and to hear some very good Portuguese spoken. It is true, of course, that, as is the case with other foreign groups in this country, the second and third generations tend to forget or to corrupt the mother tongue. Yet it is gratifying to find so much interest in and so much enthusiasm for good Portuguese. An excellent Portuguese daily newspaper is published in New Bedford, *O Diário de Notícias*, in whose office I was warmly received by the editor, Senhor João Rocha, and his friendly staff, and where I found a well-stocked *livraria*, containing books from both Portugal and Brazil, sold at cost to readers of the newspaper. I strongly recommend *O Diário* for Portuguese classes, not only linguistically, but as most interesting for what it shows of the daily life of the more than 145,000 New England Portuguese, who have long since embraced other fields than the whaling and cod fishing which first brought them to these shores more than a hundred years ago.

It is possible to attend church services conducted in Portuguese in New Bedford (as well as in Providence, Newport, Taunton, Fall River and other cities thereabout). I heard mass celebrated by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Antonio Vieira at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, and a sermon in excellent Portuguese the same morning by the Rev. Calimeiro P. Oliveira at the First Portuguese Baptist Church. There are at least four other churches in the city, whose pastors and assistant pastors bear Portuguese names, and where sermons are sometimes given in Portuguese, St. John the Baptist, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, the Portuguese Church of the Nazarene, and St. Mary's in suburban Fairhaven.

Portuguese films are frequently shown in New Bedford. It was my pleasure to see a double bill consisting of *A Rainha Santa Isabel*, and *A Canção de Lisboa*. Radio Station WNBH broadcasts several Portuguese language programs each week (as does Station WRIB in Providence).

One does not have to stay long in New Bedford to realize the Portuguese composition of the city, where 40 per cent of the population, or 44,000, is of Portuguese origin. A glance at the telephone directory, at names of store owners, and the evening newspaper, is eloquent. The following names, for instance, were gleaned from the *Standard-Times* of one evening alone, Cabral, Freitas, Silvia, Pimental, Mello, Taveira, Azevedo, Pacheco, Costa, Dias, Lucas, Perry (Pereira), Alves, Torres, Correia, and the inevitable Souza. The number of professional people is in keeping with the Portuguese proportion of the population. Even the listing of *língua* on the menus of most of the city's restaurants is symbolic!

This interesting week-end was climaxed with a short stop in Newport, Rhode Island, where Portuguese immigration long antedates that of New Bedford. It was here, in fact, that the great Jewish philanthropist, Judah Touro was born in 1775, of a family of Portuguese Jews, famous in New England history. I found the Portuguese colony busy setting up a fitting museum to house the valuable collection of Portuguese paintings given it by Mr. Herbert Claiborne Pell, former Ambassador to Portugal. And there is, of course, the perennial talk, with some sound basis of probability, that it was the Portuguese explorer, Còrteal, in the early sixteenth century, who built the mysterious Newport tower, usually credited to the Norsemen.

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### *A New Rule for the Position of Object Pronouns in French*

The position of personal object pronouns in French presents a teaching problem which has been resolved in a number of ways. The older grammars offer tables of forms to be memorized by the student, one set of progressions to be used before, and another to be used after, the verb (or verbal). Recent grammars, especially those of the "streamlined" type, attempt to simplify the problem by various rules which reduce the amount of memorizing involved. No attempt has yet produced, as far as I know, a single rule which will govern the relative position of object pronouns regardless of their place before or after the verb.

Such a rule is here presented for the consideration of French teachers who have struggled with the situation. I have used this rule with success for the last fifteen years. It is simple and practical, and it is applicable whether the object pronouns precede or follow the verb. Further more, it may be summed up conveniently in four examples.<sup>1</sup> The rule is as follows:

When there are two object pronouns, one direct and the other indirect, the direct object comes *nearest* the verb (or verbal), *unless both are of the third person*, in which case the direct precedes the indirect.<sup>2</sup>

Examples.	Il me le donne.	He gives it to me.
	Donnez-le-moi.	Give it to me.
	Je le lui donne.	I give it to him.
	Donnez-le-lui. <sup>3</sup>	Give it to him.

*Exception.* If the direct object is of the first or second person or a reflexive, the indirect object follows the verb (or verbal) as the object of the preposition *à*. This occurs most commonly in *phrases of introduction*.

Examples.	Présentez-moi à lui.	Introduce me to him.
	Voulez-vous me présenter à elle?	Will you introduce me to her?
	Je vous présenterai à lui.	I will introduce you to him.
	Il se présente à nous.	He introduces himself to us.

This rule does not take into account the particles *y* and *en*, but these may be considered separately in the following rule:

The order of object pronouns and the particles *y* and *en* is always as follows:

(1) object pronoun(s) + (2) *y* + (3) *en*.

Examples.	Il m'y envoie. (1+2)	He sends me there.
	Je lui en donne. (1+3)	I give him some.
	Il y en a. (2+3)	There is some.
	Donnez-lui-en. (1+3)	Give him some.

N.B. When *en* is used, it is always last in the series.

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### *French Tense Nomenclature*

A continuing source of annoyance to teachers of French is the fact that French verb tense nomenclature is still far from being standardized. We still do not know what the names of the tenses are. After using a certain textbook as the basis for our teaching we finally feel that our students know the names of the tenses as presented in that particular book, only to find that the next one employs a different nomenclature, calling for a new learning by the

<sup>1</sup> I should welcome criticism of the rule.

<sup>2</sup> This rule presupposes the student's knowledge that object pronouns precede the verb (or verbal) except with the affirmative imperative, when they follow.

<sup>3</sup> In this example the rule applies doubly.



student and adding immeasurably to the confusion of all concerned. Even if the instructor manages to find a review grammar, for example, which uses the same terminology as his elementary grammar, he still is likely to have students in his class who had their preliminary work elsewhere, and his problem of different nomenclatures is still with him. When he refers to a certain tense as the "past indefinite" he may have to add "which last year we called the 'passé composé'," and he may even have to say "this is the 'conditional perfect', which some of you may have learned as the 'past conditional' or the 'conditional anterior' or the 'past future perfect' or the 'past future anterior.'" Such a condition in this enlightened age is inexcusable.

With the purpose of investigating the progress, if any, that is being made toward standardization of tense nomenclature in French, I have tabulated the terms used in fifty-two grammars that are on my shelves. One half of these grammars were published between 1925 and 1939, the other half since that time. The investigation indicated that in the case of the infinitive, the present and past participles, the present indicative, the future indicative and the present subjunctive, there is complete accordance. But for the remaining eleven tenses there are at least two names, and in one instance there are actually five. When the newer group of books is compared with the older, the figures indicate that some progress toward standardization has been made. For these eleven tenses the older group employs thirty-four different terms, the newer group twenty-two terms. In every case the newer group shows a higher percentage in favor of one name. In one case, however, this name has changed—from "past conditional" in the older group to "conditional perfect" in the newer. And the name "past subjunctive" was found to have two different meanings; five texts used it as a synonym for the "imperfect subjunctive" and eleven used it for the "perfect subjunctive." How can students help being confused?

The following is a recapitulation of the findings, in terms of percentages, for the eleven tenses which have a variety of names:

	Total	Older Group	Newer Group
Imperfect indicative	92.4	85.2	100.0
Past descriptive	5.7	11.1	
Past	1.9	3.7	
Past definite	71.3	63.0	80.0
Passé simple	21.1	22.2	20.0
Past absolute	3.8	7.4	
Preterit	3.8	7.4	
Conditional	78.9	70.4	88.0
Present conditional	15.4	18.5	12.0
Past future	5.7	11.1	
Imperfect subjunctive	90.2	81.5	100.0
Past subjunctive	9.8	18.5	
Past indefinite	60.9	57.7	64.0
Passé composé	21.5	23.1	20.0
Perfect	9.8	11.5	8.0
Present perfect	7.8	7.7	8.0
Past anterior	95.2	90.4	100.0
Second pluperfect	2.4	4.8	
Second past perfect	2.4	4.8	
Future perfect	60.9	50.0	72.7
Future anterior	39.1	50.0	27.3
Conditional perfect	45.0	33.3	56.0
Past conditional	38.7	46.0	32.0

	Total	Older Group	Newer Group
Conditional anterior	10.2	8.3	12.0
Past future perfect	4.1	8.3	
Past future anterior	2.0	4.1	
Pluperfect	95.8	91.7	100.0
Past perfect	4.2	8.3	
Perfect subjunctive	56.6	56.0	57.2
Past subjunctive	23.9	28.0	19.0
Present perfect subjunctive	13.0	12.0	14.3
Passé composé du subjonctif	6.5	4.0	9.5
Pluperfect subjunctive	95.5	91.3	100.0
Past perfect subjunctive	4.5	8.7	

These figures indicate, then, that some old tense names are being eliminated. The newer group of grammars shows five more tenses which are now one hundred percent in favor of one name. But there still are three using two names, one using three, and two using four. What can be done to speed up standardization? In the first place, all associations of French teachers should adopt a standard tense nomenclature and recommend strongly that all French textbooks written hereafter make use of it and it alone. And secondly, publishing companies should insist that their authors follow the approved list. These names could be those shown above having the highest percentage in the newer group, or they could be others if it can be shown that they are more popular. In any event the need for reform is obvious. Why not put an end to an intolerable situation?

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### *A High School Conversation Class*

A recent issue of the *Modern Language Journal* contained a description of a college French conversation class which held its meetings in a drugstore rather than in the academic atmosphere of a classroom. That idea seems less practical for the High School age student, but for two years our High School French Conversation Club has been meeting from 7:30 to 9:00 P.M. every other week in the homes of the members. Refreshments are limited to Coca-Cola and pretzels, potato chips or some similar "snack." Each student has the opportunity to act as host or hostess as well as guest. The atmosphere is completely informal with the result that the conversation, embracing a wide variety of subjects and vocabulary, is natural, general and enthusiastic. This practice has contributed greatly to progress in oral expression of French II and III students.

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### *Another Sin of Omission in German Grammars\**

When my students in a second term section of Scientific German came across the sentences:\*\* 1. Als die heute hochentwickelte Wissenschaft der Geologie noch in den Kinderschuhen steckte, wurden dem Wasser manche Wirkungen zugeschrieben, die ihm heute ebenso bestimmt abgesprochen werden müssen. 2. Wie hätten sie durch Wasserfluten, und wären diese auch von der denkbar grössten Stärke gewesen, über die Ostsee hinweg und selbst Hunderte

\* See Notes & News, *Modern Language Journal*, March 1948 "Tenses of the Subjunctive After als wenn, als ob."

\*\* Curts, Readings in Scientific and Technical German, Holt & Co., pp. 38 and 39.

von Metern hoch an den Mittelgebirgen hinauf transportiert werden können, wo doch der schwere Stein auch in der stärksten Woge bald versinkt? they were puzzled by the forms abgesprochen werden müssen and particularly by hätten . . . transportiert werden können. I was amazed that they should be bothered until I looked at the grammars they had and found no mention of the use of the passive infinitive with the modals. Since then I have looked over a number of the grammars prepared for college use in German and so far have found in but one\*\*\* any mention of the use of the passive infinitive with modals, and yet some "review grammars" devote page after page to examples of and drill on the modals.

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### *The Cervantes Quadricentennial at the University of Texas*

The University of Texas has distributed a Brochure of unusual interest to the Cervantes-loving public. It is reprinted from the *Library Chronicle*, Vol. III, No. 2, and it contains short articles by members of the Department of Romance Languages of the University. These articles present the various aspects of Cervantes' great contribution to the history of culture.

The Brochure is an outgrowth of the impressive manner the University of Texas celebrated the 400th anniversary of the birth of Cervantes.

The project on the Texas campus was initiated by Dr. R. C. Stephenson, associate professor of English and Romance Languages, who at the April 21, 1947, meeting of the University's Faculty Council, moved the appointment of a special committee to prepare and executive plans for the celebration. Upon the adoption of the motion by the Council, President T. S. Painter appointed the following to serve as members of the special committee: Dr. Stephenson; Dr. C. W. Hackett, professor of Latin-American History and Director of the Institute of Latin-American Studies; Mr. Alexander Moffit, Librarian; Dr. J. G. Umstadd, professor of Secondary Education; and Dr. Aaron Shaffer, professor of Romance Languages, chairman. The committee set to work early in October, and plans were drawn up for the commemoration of the anniversary during the first two weeks of December. It was agreed that an effort would be made to acquaint the public with the various facets of Cervantes' creative genius and with the enormous influence exerted by the great Renaissance Spaniard on Occidental literature and thought.

The celebration was opened on the evening of Tuesday, December 2, when the University Drama Department presented one of Cervantes' most delightful "entremeses," *La Cueva de Salamanca*. Dr. G. G. LaGrone, associate professor of Romance Languages, prefaced the performance with a brief but informative discussion of the author's achievements as a playwright.

Cervantes' masterpiece, *Don Quixote*, provided the focus of the commemoration exercises. During the first three days of the week of Monday, December 8, three distinguished Cervantine scholars delivered four lectures on the subject of this masterpiece. On the evening of December 8, Dr. Américo Castro, professor of Spanish Literature at Princeton University and author of *El Pensamiento de Cervantes*, addressed a large gathering on "The Place of Cervantes in World Literature." In a brilliant and profound discourse, Dr. Castro presented the *Quijote* as a rare synthesis of Moorish and Hispanic thought and art which provided the foundation-stone of modern fiction. On the following morning, Dr. Antonio Castro-Leal, of the Faculty of Philosophy of the National University of Mexico, addressed a group of teachers and students in Spanish on the subject of "The Two Parts of *Don Quixote*." That afternoon, Dr. Miguel Romera-Navarro, on leave from the University of Pennsylvania to serve as Visiting Distinguished Professor at The University of Texas, read a moving paper on the topic of "Comedy and Tragedy in *Don Quixote*." The lecture-series was brought to a close on the evening of Wednesday, December 10, when Prof. Castro-Leal, in discussing "Cervantes in Latin America," produced abundant and often amusing evidence of the affection in which the creator of the

\*\*\* Hauch, *Essential German*, Oxford Press, par. 229.

visionary knight and his homespun squire is held by the Spanish-speaking citizens of the Western Hemisphere.

To those who participated in the anniversary celebration, Cervantes amply demonstrated the fact that he is now four hundred years young.

### *Sweet Briar Junior Year Abroad*

Embarking for France and a year of study at the University of Paris, 57 of the 73 men and women enrolled in the 1949-50 Junior Year in France sponsored by Sweet Briar College, sailed September 8 from New York. Dr. Mary Lane Charles, of Western College, Oxford, Ohio, assistant professor-in-charge, accompanied the group.

As a preliminary welcome to France, M. Rene de Messieres, cultural counselor to the French Embassy in New York, gave a reception for students and their parents on Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 7. President Martha B. Lucas, of Sweet Briar College, addressed the students briefly.

Thirty-three colleges and universities are represented in this year's Junior Year in France by students from 21 states, the District of Columbia and Nassau, B.W.I. Vassar, with eight, has the largest group; Yale, Bryn Mawr and Mount Holyoke have five students each, and Sweet Briar and Cornell, four each. French is the major subject of 30 students, and the remainder will pursue their studies in 19 other special fields of interest. Five men and one woman are veterans.

### *A Landmark in the History of Spanish Culture in America*

Dr. Irving Leonard of the University of Michigan is fully entitled to a warm expression of gratitude from all lovers of the dissemination of truth.

As the result of many years of research which have taken him several times to Spain and most of the countries which Spain colonized, East and West, he has brought out a most valuable work, *Books of the Brave*, published by the Harvard University Press, in which he presents, with supporting facts that can not be denied, his conclusions as to the real cultural conditions in the Spanish Colonial World during the Colonial Period when, because of political expediency at the time—and later, the "Black Legend" associated with Spain in America got its start and spread wherever it was convenient for Spain's enemies to spread it.

Dr. Leonard's *Books of the Brave* is a revealing study of men, books, and cultures, and he has presented his facts in a charming style that makes the reading of his book not only most enlightening but also very enjoyable.

## Reviews

*Goethe's Autobiography. Poetry and Truth from My Own Life.* Translated by R. O. Moon. Public Affairs Press, Washington, D. C., 1949. pp. 700. \$5.00.

The Goethe Bicentennial, commemorating the 200th anniversary of the great poet's birth in Frankfurt am Main, has been observed throughout the civilized world. It is proper that we in America should participate actively and contribute to a revival of interest in Goethe's work and thought through suitable publications. In his own lifetime Goethe watched with eager enthusiasm the early beginnings of the American Republic and continued to the end of his crowded days to manifest great interest in the New World. An American translation of Goethe's autobiography is peculiarly fitting as our tribute at this time. It was Edward Everett's review of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, which appeared in the *North American Review* of 1817, that first called America's attention to the genius of Goethe and anticipated more detailed studies to follow. The return from Europe of Ticknor, Everett, Cogswell, Bancroft, and others and their enthusiasm for Goethe stimulated the study of his work here. In time not only the Harvard group but all New England came under Goethe's influence. Emerson, William Ellery Channing, James Freeman Clarke, Margaret Fuller, and the young Transcendentalists dedicated themselves to the serious study of Goethe. Since then more than a hundred years have passed and Goethe has become firmly established in world literature, but Carlyle's wise injunction, "open thy Goethe" is a plea worth repeating in our own day.

Much of Goethe's best work, the greatness of his lyrical poetry can only be appreciated in the original. Its freshness and spontaneity, its music, its fragile and sensuous beauty suffer in translation, but the limitations of transferring ideas from one language to another need not affect his prose autobiography, his own confessions, that still remain the best portrayal of Goethe during his formative years and early successes up to his arrival in Weimar in 1775. Since its first appearance in 1811ff. much new information about Goethe has been unearthed by prodigious German scholarship, but the basic picture has not changed. Today we know almost too much about Goethe, all the trivial details of every day living that are really irrelevant to any full understanding of the man and his work. Goethe, better than any of his biographers, has given permanence to an estimate and interpretation of his early years as a preparation for life.

Unfortunately this volume proves disappointing in almost every respect. Published by a press that has specialized in books on economics, political science, and public affairs, this title is something of an alien among volumes like, *Unesco: its Purpose and Philosophy*, *The People Know Best*, *The Truman Program*, *Dictionary of Modern Economics*, etc. In fact I have a suspicion that this so-called "Bicentennial Edition" is motivated primarily by a desire to share in the glory of a well advertised Goethe revival. The "blurb" on the jacket and the "Translator's Preface" give the impression that "this is the first modern translation of a great work" expressly "designed to coincide with the celebration of the bicentennial anniversary of the birth of Johann Wolfgang Goethe," but a little investigation uncovered the fact that this edition is merely a reprint of a British translation published by A. Rivers Ltd., London in 1932 on the occasion of the centennial of Goethe's death. It sold then for ten shillings. Whereas some excellent translations of selections from Goethe have appeared this year from such representative scholars like Prof. Hermann Weigand and Ludwig Lewisohn, who have an ear for both English and German as well as a proper background, this translation is inaccurate, carelessly

done, and carelessly edited. R. O. Moon, the translator, is a British physician (born 1865), who has also translated Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and the autobiography of Jung-Stilling, apparently as a hobby. In our translation he has used the old Oxford text of 1848 as a basis for his work. Though something of an official text, hallowed by a hundred years of use and its incorporation in Bohn's Standard Library, it has been criticized severely ever since its first appearance. When in 1908 a translation by Minna Smith appeared, also based on Oxford's, the phrase "scarcely a sentence unchanged" served as the keynote. The Goethe Bicentennial celebration certainly deserved a modern, completely independent American translation from the pen of a distinguished scholar.

To list all the inaccuracies, awkward and erroneous translations, misprints, inconsistencies, and other inadequacies would make prolonged painful reading. However, I shall give some typical examples to support the above criticism. Aside from such obvious Anglicisms and peculiar spellings like "storey" (p. 7); "jewellery" (p. 35); "dreamt" (p. 38); "cithern" (p. 38); "sledging party" (p. 203); which have no place in an American edition of our day, but are found on almost every page, there are many bad translations. One might suspect a German without an adequate command of idiomatic English when finding the definite article translated again and again in such phrases as "The Sorrows of the Young Werther" (p. vii); "they have the head covered" (p. 15) instead of "their heads covered"; "everything that savoured of the belles-lettres" (p. 210); "I had read the Geiler Von Kaisersberg" (p. 215); "Kant's Critic of the Judgment" (p. 668). The spelling of German nouns with small letters ("kreutzer," p. 7; "possen," p. 247), but the spelling of "von" with a capital as in "Geiler Von Kaisersberg" just listed, reveals a lack of knowledge of German orthography. On p. 435 in nine lines of a German quotation are four mistakes! Misprints are scattered freely throughout the volume. Cf. "Volkschriften" instead of "Volkschriften" (p. 24); "Triea" instead of "Trier" (p. 159); "Ouaker" instead of "Quaker" (p. 208); "Die Mitschuldigen" instead of "Die Mitschuldigen" (p. 247); "Geissen" instead of "Giessen" (p. 488). The Umlaut is missing on "Munch" (p. 585, footnote and p. 698) and on "Uber" (p. 434); "Zinzendorf" is spelled correctly (p. 295), but appears as "Zinzensdorf" (p. 561, footnote and in index, where the earlier occurrence of the name is not even listed; "Wilheim" instead of "Wilhelm" (p. 391, footnote); "Wittenburg" instead of "Wittenberg" (p. 413, footnote); "Brettinger" instead of "Breitinger" (p. 693).

Factual errors have also crept in. The "statutes for the administration of criminal justice" were promulgated by Charles V in 1532 not in 1555 as explained in a footnote (p. 11); the date of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was 1748 not 1747 (p. 12, footnote 2); the French dramatist Nivelle de la Chaussée is listed as "Le Chaussée" (p. 73). The use of footnotes is completely arbitrary. Some names are identified, some Latin quotations are translated, but most of them are not. Even where German editors have seen the need for annotating unusual terms in footnotes—for example "Pfarreisen" (p. 8) which refers to a path across the church square that could be locked—not a hint is given. The German term is retained and the reader is kept in the dark. Yet two lines later the reference to an old coin, the "Batzen," is carefully explained as "the fifteenth part of a Gulden." The unsystematic method of supplying footnotes is revealed in the treatment of the Swiss literary critics. They are mentioned on p. 225, Breitinger is named on p. 226f., Bodmer on p. 227, but with no explanatory footnote. However, when Bodmer reappears on p. 646 a footnote identifying him, giving his dates, and describing his ideas is included! The index lists Breitinger as "Brettinger" for pp. 226–227, but Bodmer only for pp. 646–648. How many English readers would know that the "Island of Felsenburg," a title given on p. 24, is the best German imitation of *Robinson Crusoe*, or that Goethe's reference to Laertes (p. 27), is not to Shakespeare's character but to the father of Odysseus?

And finally, the awkward translations are legion. Some reflect an inadequate knowledge of German and others a lack of feeling for concise or idiomatic English. The phrase "anstatt nach irgend einer Näscherei zu greifen" is rendered as "instead of some eating by stealth" (p. 24); "weder von Masern noch Windblattern, und wie die Quälgeister der Jugend heissen mögen" becomes "measles nor chicken-pox, as the torments of youth are called" (p. 26); "dass



diese Krankheit nun für immer vorüber sei" becomes "that this malady was now got for ever" (p. 26); "sich mit dem Könige nicht einzulassen" becomes "not to mix himself up with the King" (p. 59); "die Herren von Löwenich von Aachen" becomes "the Herren from Lowenicht of Aix-la-Chapelle" (p. 213); "sie kommt nicht" is translated literally as "she comes not" (p. 617); "Lahnthal" is assumed to be the name of a city instead of being translated "the valley of the Lahn" (p. 477); "durch die Hermannsschlacht und die Zueignung desselben an Joseph den Zweiten" becomes the incomprehensible "by 'Hermann's—Schlacht,' and the dedication of the same to Joseph II," (p. 471). Need one say more?

WALTER A. REICHART

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WIECHERT, ERNST, *The Poet and His Time*. Translated by Irene Taeuber. Henry Regnery Company, Hinsdale, Illinois, 1948.

JUENGER, ERNST. *The Peace*. Translated by Stuart O. Hood, Henry Regnery Company, Hinsdale, Illinois, 1948.

I should rate these two short books as "required reading" on the German problem—and I speak as one who no longer attempts to keep abreast of the floodtide of postwar literature on that subject. My reason: their immediacy, the intimate insight of the poet Wiechert and the novelist Juenger into the underlying spiritual crisis of their fellow-citizens.

Such insight is, by and large, an advantage lacking in the more objective writings of economists and historians of the occupying powers. Necessarily, however, the intensity and depth of these two Germans excludes some of the breadth and perspective an outsider would contribute. One feels that both men have long been shut off from the vital currents of world developments. The sharp introspection into self and country which results has validity (this seems especially true of the first two of Wiechert's three essays) but lends a tinge of vagueness and unreliability to certain wider historical speculations about the future (notably in Juenger's wishful picturing of "The Peace").

Wiechert gives us a remarkable confession of faith, Juenger a remarkable document of conversion. Wiechert, who held to that faith through all the Hitler years (and suffered for so doing) invokes the spiritual regeneration of the Germans through admission (and definition!) of their guilt, through continued suffering, sacrifice and retribution. Juenger, who once was an extreme nationalist, though never a Nazi, conjures up an optimistic vision in which his old nationalism has become an extreme internationalism. Under its aegis there shall be no distinction between victors and vanquished: "That this war must be won by all signifies . . . that none must lose it. Even today it is possible to foretell that if it is not won by all, it will be lost by all." He sees all war as civil war, as planetary fratricide.

While Juenger is saying that the earth "lies like an apple in the hand of man," Wiechert (whose mysticism is more personal, and more convincing for being so) examines the same hand for bloodstains and the brow for the mark of Cain. I have seldom read more stirring prose than Wiechert's earlier speech to the Munich students in the spring of 1935. What he said to them at that time about the family, about God, about national aspirations, we could all listen to profitably. I can quote only a smattering: "It has always been true that, with the cooling of the hearthflame, the house too becomes cold, and with it the blood of a people. . . . In the ancient tablets of the earth it is not written that man, but that God, is lord of the earth. . . . A generation that wants to open the last door everywhere will perish on the threshold of that door."

His depiction of the course of the Hitler years in a similar address ten years later (the first in this book) is a close second in eloquence and certainly the best first-hand description I have encountered in print.

These books are among the first half-dozen to appear as "The Humanist Library" from the press of what I take to be a new firm in Hinsdale, Illinois. The series is inexpensive at two

dollars each, as book-prices nowadays run. Three of the remaining titles deal, like these, with the German problem from relatively close quarters. So far as the Wiechert and Juenger books are concerned, we have reason to be grateful to the publishers. It should be interesting to watch their listing grow.

HERMAN SALINGER

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KUNITZ, JOSHUA, *Russian Literature Since the Revolution*. Boni and Gaer, New York, 1948, pp. 932. Price \$6.00.

An anthology of literature that seeks to convey the autobiographical nature of a people is bound to impress us by its projected scope. When the nation is Russia, and when the nature includes both the ideals and realities of Soviet life, the scope expands to the very limits of one man's capabilities. Yet few men in the United States today are as well fitted as Joshua Kunitz to undertake and carry to completion just such a task. The well-known writer and lecturer lays stress on the "ruthless realism" of Soviet literature, which has evolved logically from the dicta of Belinsky and Mikhailovsky, and he has rendered American readers a signal service by logically dividing the anthology, i.e., the autobiography of the Soviet people, into four sections: Wartime Communism, 1917-1921; The New Economic Policy, 1921-1927; Industrialization, The Five Year Plans, 1928-1941; and the Second World War and the Post-War Period, 1941-1947. Moreover, he has written for each of them a brief but illuminating historical foreword.

Book One, or Wartime Communism, explodes like the chaos it records. The poetry blossoms forth with declarations of policy, the growth of new schools; death is a dominant theme. Alexander Blok's "The Twelve" describes a winter-terrified Petrograd and, in storm's rising, a vision of a future even through the death, triumphing over death: "Christ marches on. And twelve are led." Mayakovsky's prodigious labors as painter, cartoonist, orator, reciter, and actor, typify the preoccupation of the Soviet writer with the core facts of Soviet life. The old order passeth; the new order cometh. Vsevolod Ivanov tells of the wild joylessness of Mongolia and Isaac Babel brings before our eyes the killing without regret of a father. And if we object to the cruelty, if the chaos of destruction annoys us, we must remember that this is the way the Russian writers saw life, neither steadily nor whole because the life itself had splinters, because the Revolution itself was still in process.

Book Two, or the New Economic Policy, mirrors the vast changes in the history of the land, the separation of Church from State, the emancipation of women, and the state capitalism of Lenin's famous plan to end the brigandage of the population's discontented elements. The young-old dualism becomes the dominant motif of the literature. Shishkov satirizes the theatrical performance in the hamlet of Ogryzovo, at which the nightingale sings, the ducks quack, the frogs croak, and the cow lows; but the laughter is not unkind. And with the increasing stability of Russian life, writers return to some of the old values. Seifullina has pity for the dry stoniness of an old woman who fails completely to understand the reason for her son's taking up a new way of life. Romanov pauses along the way to sigh for a family that has broken up. Even Lidin, in one of the anthology's few frankly nostalgic stories, understands that newness entails harshness. The writers, like the people they describe, do not intend to go back; but the chasm, they find, between yesterday and today, "between the old and the new intelligentsia," is bridgeable; the reconciliation is possible.

Book Three, the period of industrialization and collectivization, is in brief the return to the class struggle, the filling of the air with slogans, and (as in a nightmare from which the other European nations cannot wake) the rumble of war-drums in China, Germany, and Spain. Many writers fall by the wayside; the new pace is too fast. They demand time to think problems over. But time will not wait, and Gorky denounces them for thinking that literature is their own private affair: "pernicious rubbish," he calls it, and Sholokhov writes "Seeds of Tomorrow" to prove that the new world can produce literature. Ovechkin describes the in-

spection of a neighboring "Red Caucasus" collective farm to see how it is carrying out the socialist competition. Leonov epitomizes the heart of the problem in his description of the insane rhythm of jazz as played in Budapest and Toulouse. And even Ilf and Petrov, lovable and more fair than most visitors to America, return to Russia with a renewed sense of dedication. This, then, is their land, and they will live in it, for better or worse.

Book Four, which brings us up to the present time, resounds with the moral faith of Russians at war. Emotional, proud, resentful, Ehrenburg speaks for his brethren when he lays down a writer's duty in wartime. Simonov's poem, "Wait for Me," strikes the eternal note; polemics can grow into art. Again the clarion call to action; again the devastation; but through it all the affirmation, the knowledge that something has been found in the last twenty years that is of value, that cannot and shall not be lost. Beck's soldier has no sympathy for the deserter. Tikhonov's old soldier rises from his deathbed to celebrate the Russian Army's victory at Moscow. Sobolev's nurse is resolute and great with a beauty even war cannot obliterate. Naghibin narrates the legend—always new, already old, as timely as the *Odyssey* itself—of the returning serviceman. And the book ends on Paustovsky's fervent cry, "And it *will* be!"

*Russian Literature Since the Revolution* needs a thorough proof-reading in the second half, but in general is attractively printed and presented. Mr. Kunitz's work blazes trails, and is one of the season's most important publications. Besides being a sociological study, the anthology provides an enormous amount of good reading. Mr. Kunitz does not stress this point; his consideration is historical; but surely somewhere in a complete review the point should be made.

HAROLD OREL

*University of Michigan*

BERKOWITZ, H. CHONON, *Pérez Galdós, Spanish Liberal Crusader*. The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 1948, pp. xl+499. Price \$6.00.

Dr. Berkowitz's biography of Pérez Galdós is a most valuable contribution to Galdosiana. Although the author states in his Preface: "The present biography lays claim neither to definitiveness of content nor to infallibility of interpretation," his detailed study will be resorted to for a long, long time to come by students of Galdós' works seeking accurate information on the circumstances attending the composition of the prolific writer's many works. Moreover, the biography is highly readable, revealing as it does that zest for the picturesque and yet exact word characteristic of the author's written style as teacher and scholar.

The author's sub-title has fortunately not circumscribed the presentation of his subject. Sympathy for Galdós is necessarily strong, but such *rapprochement* with his subject has not prevented Dr. Berkowitz from portraying vividly and intimately Galdós' vacillations in his dealings with the republican bloc of the early 1900s, or his later senile coquettings with the monarchy of Alfonso XIII.

The book is most unique in its account of the illustrious novelist's early years, lack of knowledge regarding which had been so deplored by *Clarín*, Galdós' most friendly contemporary critic. In his attempt to fill in this notorious gap in the existing Galdós-chronicle, Dr. Berkowitz seems to have been greatly aided by the cooperation of relatives and friends of the novelist still living in Las Palmas, and chiefly by José Hurtado de Mendoza y Tate, a nephew who evidently had followed close at hand his famous uncle's career in Madrid. Dr. Berkowitz appears to have most enriched his book from his contacts with the last named gentleman in the chapters dealing with Galdós' theatrical ventures,—Dramatic Debut, Backstage with Galdós, and Apotheosis, the last dealing with the clamor surrounding the play *Electra*,—as well as in *passim* references to Galdós' solvency, while Mendoza y Tate is stated to have been with his uncle in scenes typical of the latter's declining years.

While Dr. Berkowitz has illumined Galdós' childhood and youth, he has left largely un-

resolved the question of the relations of young Benito toward his father, Sebastián Pérez. Regarding the mother, Dolores, Dr. Berkowitz writes (p. 4); "It is noteworthy that all her children, and particularly Benito, bore a much more striking resemblance to her than to her inconspicuous husband." The *resemblance* is explained elsewhere (p. 19): "Her domineering nature, her strong will, her sense of the profound seriousness of life, her imperious demand for an ordered existence, her infinite respect for the fitness of things, and her keen perception of all basic moral values, [were] traits which her son inherited in generous measure." On the same page of the book, Dr. Berkowitz supports the theory that the protagonist of the novel *Doña Perfecta* immortalizes Galdós' mother. So the effect, apparently, on Benito of the basic *resemblance* Dr. Berkowitz finds between the "timid, sickly, and ungainly little boy" (p. 21), and the stern, autocratic, humorless doña Dolores (=doña Perfecta), was a deep dislike for his mother.

In the quest for light on his real vocation in life, the novelist-to-be found himself in opposition to his proud mother's wish that he become a lawyer. As is well known, Galdós' resistance to his mother was passive: he was writing extensively for Madrid journals while grossly neglecting the course in law into which his mother had pushed him and in which he continued to enroll year after year.

The attitude of Galdós' father toward the son's academic malingerings in Madrid is not revealed by Dr. Berkowitz, who clearly obtained the special information for his biography from the members of the Galdós family. Although Sebastián fought with distinction in the War of Independence, attaining the rank of lieutenant, and although from very humble beginnings, "his rural properties and sound investments in the fishing industry of Las Palmas enabled him to educate his [ten] children properly and to secure for his family a position of esteem in the community" (p. 11), he was the forgotten man of the domestic scene, and Dr. Berkowitz clearly rates him a fuddy-duddy. He did serve, however, as an escape for his children from the mother's "austere discipline," by regaling them with tales of his military exploits, told "with infinite humility." In the section called "Notes and References," into which the ordinary reader would probably not stray, Dr. Berkowitz points out that "Don Sebastián must have influenced . . . Benito indirectly. The central figure of the first ten *Episodios nacionales* presumably immortalizes the humble and modest Sebastián Pérez." (p. 463).

It would appear to the reviewer that Dr. Berkowitz was unduly impressed with the importance of the Galdós heritage, because of the accessibility of information vouchsafed by surviving Galdóses. Don Benito the novelist was destined to spend a great part of his life searching out humble and inconspicuous characters in the Spanish landscape; his own father seems to have served as a proving ground for his natural talents. When Dr. Berkowitz writes on his opening page, that "One might almost say that, were it not for his biological indispensability, all reference to the father could well be omitted," he is adopting an untenable position which gives a curious distortion to the pages that follow. *Modesty, humility, inconspicuousness*, are words applicable to father and talented son alike; none of them fits the mother! A sense of humor is apparent in the novelist-son, and it would almost inevitably have been a characteristic of the father, for him to have survived the tyrannical rule of his dictatorial wife. In an accounting of parental and environmental factors, it may be impossible now to define with accuracy the submerged Pérez plasma. But from the meager evidence offered by Dr. Berkowitz in opposition to his own thesis of Galdós-supremacy, it must have been the *father* who lent the son whatever constructive sympathy and stimulus toward colorful narration the latter received at home. The mother served as the model for doña Perfecta.

In addition to feeling the lack of a chapter on the Pérez strain in the formation of Benito Pérez Galdós, one closes the book with an uneasy feeling that an important chapter—and a long one—could have been included on the distinguished writer's sex life and its repercussions on his literary performances. Dr. Berkowitz has himself supplied a section of such a chapter

in the discussion on the genesis of *El abuelo* (pp. 330 ff.), where the bachelor Galdós is stated to have become the father of a baby daughter shortly before writing that work dealing with the natural goodness of an illegitimate girl. Dr. Berkowitz also asserts that Galdós had an office boy who "was a youth who might have rightfully called his employer father had he not been born under circumstances which had long been shrouded in the utmost secrecy" (p. 328). This singular statement is far from clarified by a second reference to the same lad (p. 332): "Vague bits of gossip about the boy's origin came floating toward him [Galdós] from time to time. Somehow it did not occur to Galdós that the stares and whispers were meant to remind him that Paco was more than an office boy to him. He interpreted them as veiled hints at the boy's illegitimate birth, a fact with which he was hazily acquainted." (Italics are mine.) What is the reader to conclude, that Galdós was so bemused as to have forgotten the fact of paternity, or was he an innocent friend of a youngster travelling under a cloud?

Nor is the office boy the only unclear issue in Galdós sex life as it is fleetingly glimpsed. Innuendoes abound: "occasional amatory escapades" (p. 57); "contrition . . . for the carnal creatures he had so irresponsibly engendered" (p. 177); "the purely human joys he experienced there [Paris] were of such an intimate nature that they must remain shrouded in secrecy" (p. 194); "his mounting needs, occasioned by the irregularities of his passional life" (p. 218, cf. p. 242); "female extortionists" (p. 317); "a certain form of personal indulgence that was upsetting his budget" (p. 326); "abnormal urges and passions" (p. 419). Is Dr. Berkowitz recording loose gossip, or has he merely neglected to register the trustworthy basis of his information? Such ambiguous clauses, not far removed from smirks, are anachronistic in our day.

One has the overall impression, on finishing the present biography, that it was not adequately checked after completion. But the book is a gold mine of intimate scenes and impressions of the famous author's life and times. From it emerges—if not a *crusader*—a complex creative personality harassed by inhibitions and self-questionings, with an intuitive understanding of warped and suffering humanity, the personality of an artist who, as Dr. Berkowitz so expressively states in his Preface, gave "to his era . . . the courage to contemplate its own full-length portrait in a none too flattering mirror."

N. W. EDDY

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BALSEIRO, JOSÉ A., *Blasco Ibáñez, Unamuno, Valle Inclán, Baroja—Cuatro Individualistas de España*. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1949, pp. xv+271. Price \$4.00.

The publisher's announcement of the above mentioned book has the following to say:

Los cuatro individualistas examinados aquí se destacan entre las personalidades más discutidas y combatidas de la España de su tiempo. Situarlos con exactitud es tarea que requería tanto amor a la verdad como delicadeza de juicio y precisión expresiva. Blasco Ibáñez, Unamuno, Valle Inclán y Baroja fueron vistos de cerca por Balseiro.

Those of us who have read Professor Balseiro's other critical works have been hoping for several years that he would give us an eye witness account of some of the twentieth century Spanish authors that he knew personally while living in Spain. Now that this study of four of the outstanding recent writers has been published, we are still looking forward to other studies of the rest of this very interesting group, sometimes called *Generation of '98*. Dr. Nicholson B. Adams, who has written the *Prefacio*, has stated so well what we subconsciously had been thinking for some time that we should like to quote from him, *Prefacio* VIII and IX:

Parece que los isleños (el Sr. Balseiro es portorriqueño) gozan de cierta ventaja sobre los de tierra firme. ¿Quién tuvo, por ejemplo, la profunda y amplia visión de España que tuvo el canariense Galdós? Los eruditos hermanos Henríquez Ureña, dominicanos, han visto las cosas de España con ojos sobremediano claros. El Sr. Balseiro, aun siendo hispanoamericano de nacimiento, carece de todo patriotismo meramente local, y mira a España y al resto del mundo con visión ecuánime e imparcial. Todos observamos en el día una tendencia lamentable a



contraponer lo español y lo hispanoamericano. El Sr. Balseiro no. Cree que le tradición es una, aunque aparezcan diferencias por acá y por allá debidas a un ambiente especial. Sabe avalorar lo hispano en el fiel de la balanza internacional.

It has been our pleasure to converse with Professor Balseiro from time to time and to question him about his personal contacts with the novelists that were still alive when he was in Spain. It has always seemed to us that had more contemporaries written about Dickens, Balzac or Goethe, we should have a more personalized idea of these master spirits of world literature. We are, therefore, very glad to read what Professor Balseiro has written about the four men discussed in his recent book.

Many students of Spanish literature have remarked about the relative value of the so-called Germanic type of criticism and what we often call the Spanish subjective criticism. We think of Germanic scholarship as the painstaking consultation of all possible sources and the use of lengthy quotations. The *Germanic* study is delimited by an ever present attempt at objectivity. We are conscious that Professor Balseiro has read all criticism of these four Spanish authors. Nevertheless, there is an individualism and, up to a certain point, a subjectivity that lends interest and insight to his writings. Far from accepting what other critics have written as 24 karat gold, Professor Balseiro has felt free to differ with them, at times diametrically. It is this willingness to stand on his own feet and to draw on his omnivorous reading that adds interest to Professor Balseiro's very fine study. After all, we who have been brought up under the tutelage of the so-called Germanic scholars must be ready to confess that our attempts at objectivity are often "straining at a gnat to swallow a camel." Art, and literature is of course an art, appeals to our sense of appreciation and can never be based on purely scientific criteria.

It is very difficult to treat four such different writers in one book. It means that the critic has had to change his point of view on going from Blasco Ibáñez to Unamuno or from Valle Inclán to Baroja. This is, of course, as it ought to be, for each great artist must be judged by a different set of criteria. One thing Professor Balseiro finds running through the literary production of all four; this is their *españolismo*. Each writer, when at his best and in his own way, is *muy español*. It is interesting, to give only one example, to find that Balseiro devotes several pages (25-29) to show how much Blasco Ibáñez owes to Pérez Galdós. Whereas many students of Blasco Ibáñez have written pages to prove that he has imitated Zola or Flaubert, and we have sinned in this respect along with others, Professor Balseiro has proved to his satisfaction and to ours that it is unnecessary to cross the Pyrenees to find Blasco's masters in the art of novel writing.

We feel that all serious students of the Spanish novel ought to place *Cuatro individualistas de España* on the shelf within easy reach by the side of *Novelistas modernos españoles* by the same critic. We are going to leave a place also for the next volume that we are sure Professor Balseiro will prepare to discuss the other great Spanish novelists of the twentieth century.

JAMES O. SWAIN

University of Tennessee

TURK, LAUREL HERBERT and ALLEN, EDITH MARION, *El español al día*. Book One. D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, 1949, pp. xx+311. Price \$2.48.

Book One of *El español al día* is intended, as the title suggests, for those "who desire a practical knowledge of Spanish." It is the first in a series of two texts prepared for high school students who have to meet college entrance requirements in foreign languages as well as for those who do not plan to go to college.

The material is presented in forty-five lessons and nine reviews. The reading in the lessons consists of dialogues, which contain useful words, phrases, and grammatical points for those wishing to speak Spanish. There is a "systematic repetition of material from the earlier lessons." In addition to the dialogues each lesson has a list of new words and idioms, an explana-



tion of grammar, questions in Spanish, exercises, and English sentences to be written in Spanish. Drill in pronunciation is given in the first fifteen lessons and the first three reviews.

The authors, while recognizing the value in the study of the history and culture of the Spanish-speaking peoples, have felt it necessary to restrict the amount of the material "because of the limits of time imposed by modern educational systems." In the reviews, however, are several selections of a cultural nature. The photographs also furnish a starting point for getting acquainted with the various Spanish-speaking countries. Throughout the text are inserted thirty-two full pages of glossy photographs in addition to twenty-four other pictures and four maps in the regular lessons and reviews. These include pictures from practically all the Spanish-speaking countries.

Although the authors say, "Words used in the text have been chosen with consideration for their practical use rather than for their literary frequency," those interested chiefly in teaching reading of Spanish can also use this text. The grammar explanations are essential for both practical and literary use. There are almost sixteen hundred lines of reading in the "diálogos" and the other selections in the reviews. Although the authors do not claim to have chosen words for literary frequency, a hasty count reveals that there are approximately four hundred and twenty-five words from Group I (the first five hundred words of highest frequency) from Keniston's *A Standard List of Spanish Words and Idioms*, two hundred from Group II, one hundred and twenty from Group III, and one hundred and thirty-five from Group IV. There are, in addition over one hundred and fifty items listed by Keniston either as idioms, derivatives from the two thousand words of highest frequency, international words, or names of countries. This leaves over four hundred words not mentioned in the Keniston lists. Many of these, however, are easily recognizable cognates, including proper names. Most of the other are practical words, indispensable for conversation in Spanish.

For those preferring the direct method there is a list of expressions for classroom use and a list of grammatical terms in Spanish.

The text has a very attractive binding and a colorful frontispiece. It is a convenient size for daily use.

This introduction to Spanish via the spoken word should give the student a practical knowledge of the language and create an interest in further study.

ELAINE EHRHARDT

*University of Tennessee*

LÓPEZ Y FUENTES, GREGORIO, *Tierra*. Edited by Henry A. Holmes and Walter A. Bara. Ginn and Company, New York, 1949, pp. xxx+221. Price \$2.50.

*Tierra*, a novel by the author of *El Indio*, deals with the Mexican peasants and their leader Zapata in the state of Morelos between 1910 and 1920. It is historically accurate and gives a vivid and stirring account of the *paisanos'* fierce struggle for land.

The novel is written in an episodic, original and forceful style. López y Fuentes champions the oppressed and is concerned with struggles of groups rather than individuals. The *paisanos* are the heroes of the novel. It is not a pleasant novel for it very realistically describes the terrible economic and social conditions of the Indians on the *haciendas* and the brutal acts of the revolutionaries and the government troops. By reading this novel students in the United States will have a better understanding of the land problem in Mexico which has had so much influence on national and international policies.

The twenty-two page introduction in English gives a very complete and necessary historical background of the agrarian movement in Mexico from colonial days to 1910. The land reforms of recent administrations are mentioned. The introduction also gives an analysis of *Tierra* and a criticism of the works and style of López y Fuentes.

*Tierra* is exceptionally attractive in its make-up and printing. The cover is artistic and the

end papers have a map of the state of Morelos. There are full page reproductions of nine of Rivera's murals. An Orozco mural and nine lithographs of his murals at Jiquilpan are also used to illustrate various chapters.

Notes, idioms, and the translation of difficult phrases are at the bottom of each page. The novel contains many words not on any word list but all are to be found in the vocabulary. The vocabulary has only one column of words to a page which makes word hunting much easier.

There are one hundred and twenty pages of reading in the novel. There are no questions or exercises in the book. The novel is suitable for second year college classes and advanced high school classes.

*Tierra* is a fine addition to the list of Spanish American novels available in textbook form.

MARGARET KIDDER

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CAÑEDO, DIEGO, *La noche anuncia el día*, edited by Virgil A. Warren. New Directions, Norfolk, Connecticut, 1949, pp. xiv+231. Price \$1.90.

Diego Cañedo's *La noche anuncia el día* is a novel that gives an interesting insight into the political aspects of Latin American life. The intriguing development of the plot expresses in a very specific and unique manner the corrupt practices and make-up of a political machine, and the disastrous results that such a machine may produce in a country where political development has not as yet reached its maturity. The scenes and incidents described revolve around the life of the main character, Antonio Cutiño, who through his political and extraordinary powers of analytical observation becomes one of the most powerful political figures in La Paz. Antonio Cutiño's knowledge of political facts brings about his assassination.

The editor has stated in his preface that the purpose of the book is "to present certain aspects of South American life that contrast with those of our country." Perhaps it could be added that the student will also receive a well-rounded viewpoint of the struggles that the people to the south of the Rio Grande must experience as they strive to achieve and develop a more well balanced political machine than they now have.

The student will get practice in the exercises, notes and complete vocabulary that have been set up for him by the editor. Not only will the student become acquainted with every day conversational expressions but also with the colorful speech of the people of La Paz.

It is to be hoped that the contents of this book may bring about a better understanding of Latin American life in general on the part of each student that becomes acquainted with it. Dr. Warren has indeed contributed material in this text that will enable the student to achieve such an understanding of his Latin neighbors.

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